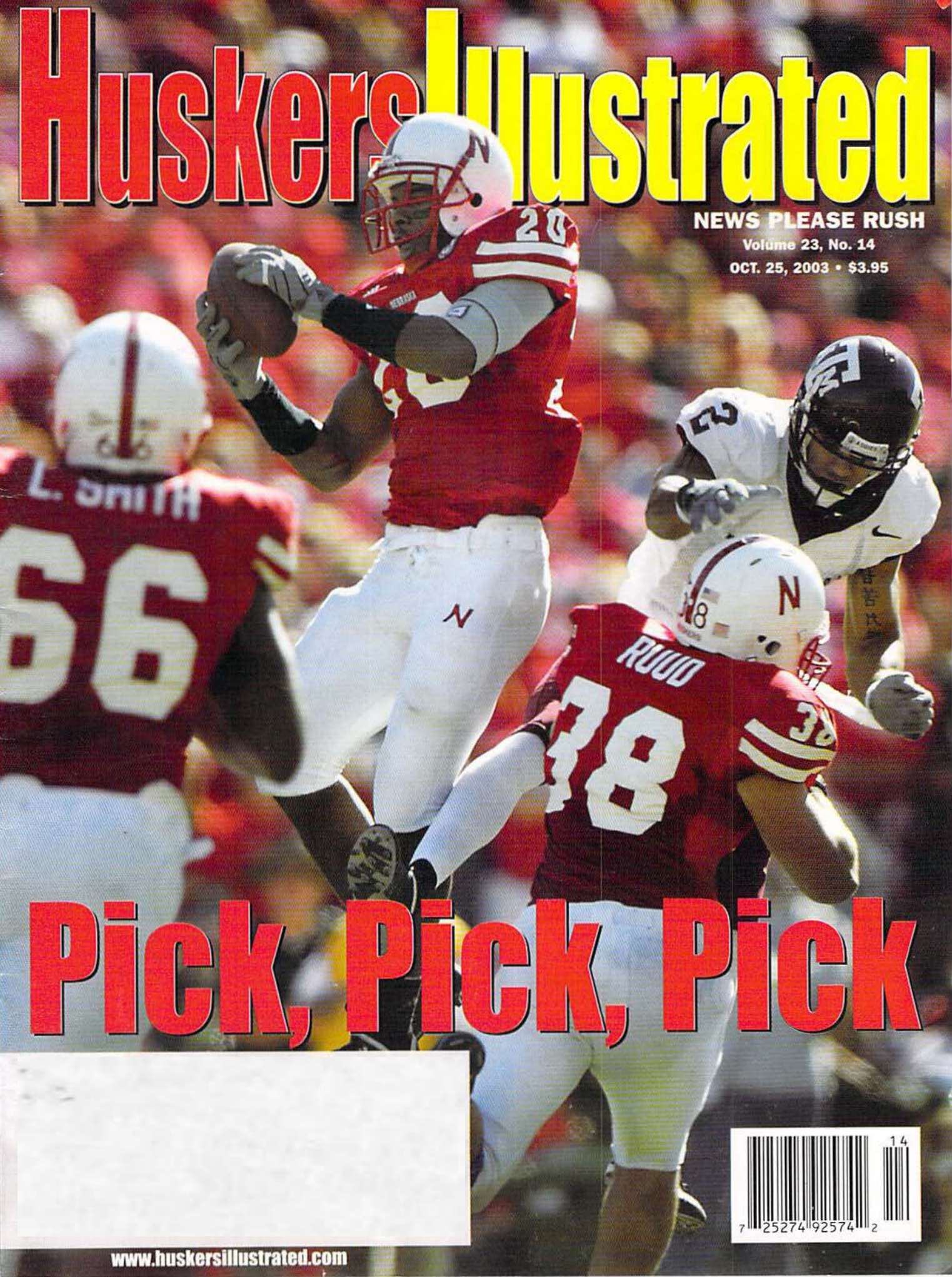
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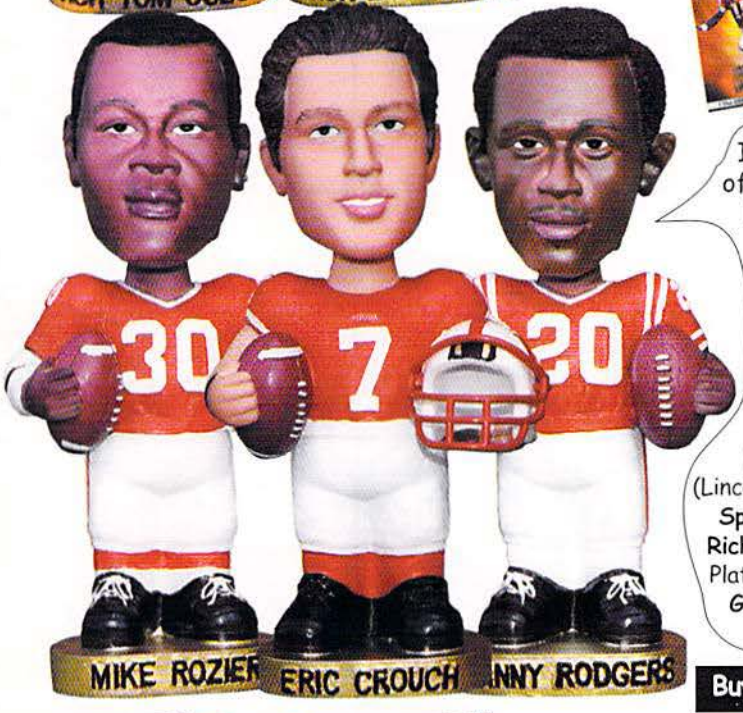

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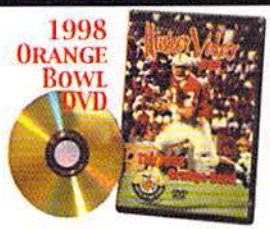

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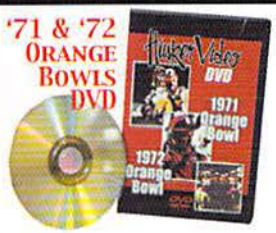

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FROM THE EDITOR

Huge Difference

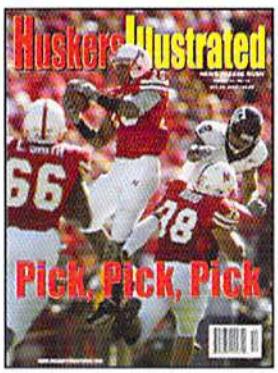
Opportunistic Huskers capitalize on Aggies' misfortune

Brian HILL

THE QUESTION all week was how Nebraska would respond to its first loss at Missouri. There were danger signs in the fourth quarter of that game, and there were a lot of "here-we-go-again(s)" being tossed around by the Husker (not-so-) faithful.

In 2002, the first loss led to the second loss, and you know the rest of the story.

There was also the added distraction of the Kellen Huston situation. In case you were out of the country last week, the junior holder and backup cornerback was suspended for one game for punching a Missouri fan in the postgame craziness in Columbia. The unfortunate incident has been displayed and debated coast-to-coast, so we won't dwell on it here. Hopefully some good will come out of it in the form of better crowd control measures. It's amazing there haven't been more problems when fans rush the field and go for the goal posts.



After Nebraska's first touchdown against Texas A&M a week later, substitute holder Ross Pilkington bobbled the snap, and the way things were going at that point (NU led 6-3), it looked like that 1 point might loom large.

Fourteen seconds later, free safety Josh Bullocks intercepted an A&M pass, and the Huskers capitalized in five plays. A little more than two minutes later, middle linebacker Barrett Ruud picked off a pass and took it 27 yards for a touchdown.

Suddenly, it was 20-3 with 1:45 remaining in the first quarter. And the Aggies just kept on giving.

You can read about Nebraska benefiting from a whopping eight turnovers, in a 48-12 Homecoming victory, in this edition of Huskers Illustrated. As usual, there's much, much more.

In our feature story, contributing editor Mike Babcock takes a look at the Husker recruiting process with new recruiting coordinator Scott Downing. Senior I-back Robin Miller, who had a career-long touchdown run in the Southern Mississippi game, is the subject of our player profile.

The list of milestones and achievements continues to grow for this year's Blackshirts. The Huskers have intercepted 16 passes, compared to 13 all last season, and their turnover total of 29 is eight more than the final total in 2002.

Nebraska, which was demoralized by committing five turnovers a week earlier, this time benefited from eight takeaways, with no giveaways.

Of course, the Husker defense had to be in the right place at the right time. A&M quarterback Reggie McNeal had thrown only two interceptions in 112 attempts going into the game. Nebraska intercepted him three times in 19 attempts.

A&M Coach Dennis Franchione had no explanation. "We kept hurting ourselves," he said afterward. "It almost felt like we were playing with a wet ball out there. It's very disappointing because we prepared very well and the kids fought hard. It's not like this offense to turn the ball over as many times as we did.

"It was a snowball effect out there."

The Huskers know all about that and hope to continue to stay on the receiving end. ■

ON THE COVER

Free safety Josh Bullocks picks off the first of Nebraska's five interceptions. The defense forced eight turnovers. *Photo by Scott Bruhn.*

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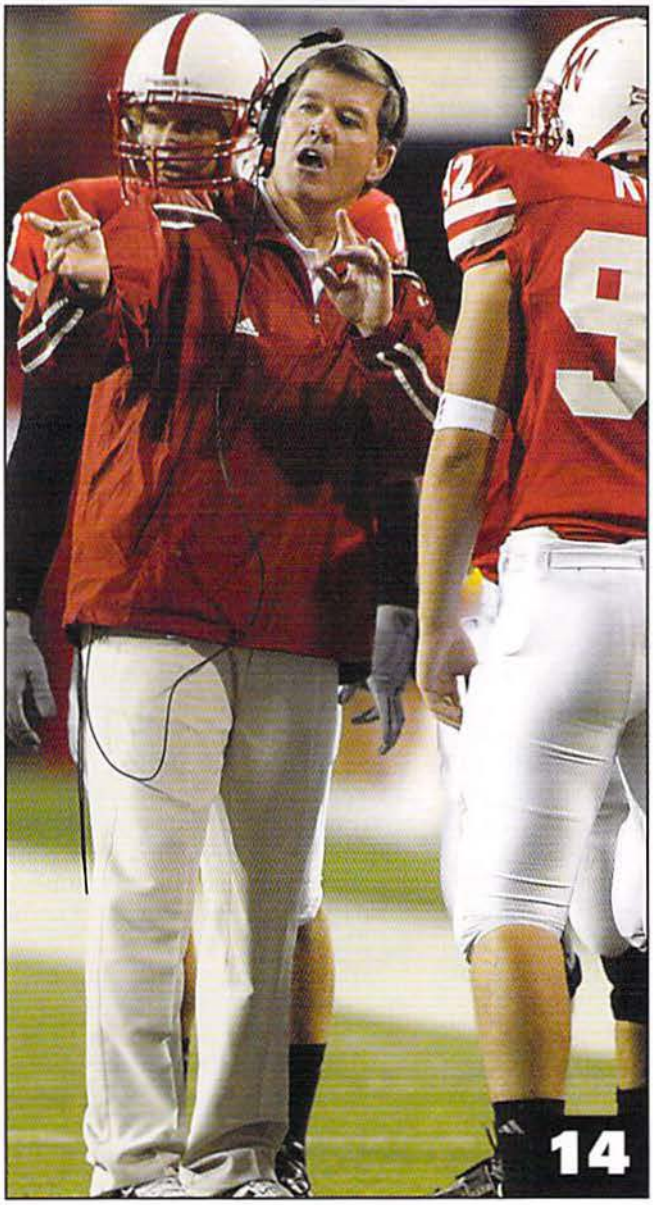

14 It's Like Marketing

First-year recruiting coordinator Scott Downing says Nebraska is constantly evaluating the process for attracting talent to Lincoln. *By Mike Babcock*

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The Texas A&M review/Iowa State preview edition will be mailed Oct. 20. Check for updates at huskersillustrated.com.

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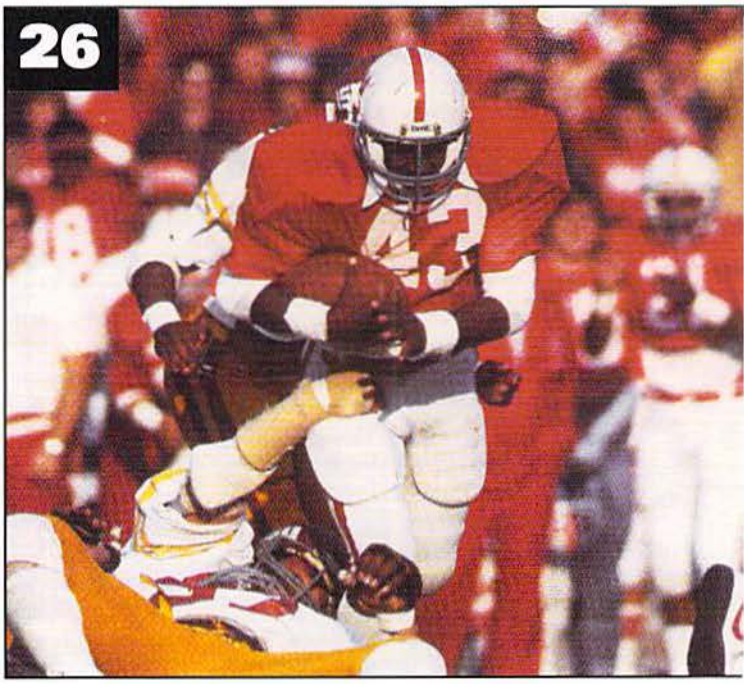

Added Numbers

Second-year Coach Connie Yori (left) welcomes back five starters, including Alexa Johnson (middle) and Margaret Richards (right).

And now for something completely different. Well, sort of.

"We have a novel concept this year," says Connie Yori, Nebraska's second-year women's basketball coach. "We think we're going to have an opportunity to sub, look down the bench and actually put somebody in besides the five that are on the floor. So that will be really nice."

It would have been really nice last season, but Yori was limited in what she could do with only a handful of scholarship players available to her to put in the games.

She will have about twice as many as last season, five returning letter-winners, all of them starters, and six freshmen, the majority of whom will be counted on to contribute.

"We're going to have two, three, four of our freshmen do some things," Yori says.

The team's foundation, however, is the returning players: seniors Alexa Johnson, Margaret Richards, Keasha Cannon-Johnson and Katie Morse, and junior Jina Johansen.

Johnson, who earned all-conference honorable mention, averaged a team-high 14.8 points and 6.8 rebounds, while Richards led the team in steals and averaged 11.4 points.

Morse was averaging 12 points and 7.9 rebounds when she suffered a torn ACL in the first half of the seventh game, an upset of No. 25-ranked Cincinnati. Morse underwent surgery in December and was "coming along very well," says Yori, when practice began in mid-October.

"We think that she is close to being 100 percent, about as close as she could be."

Cannon-Johnson was redshirted last season, after being selected the Big 12 Newcomer of the Year as a junior college transfer, averaging 12.9 points, 8.4 rebounds, 4 assists and 2.1 steals.

Johansen, the 5-foot-7 point guard, played a school-record 36.7 minutes per game and was credited with 153 assists, the second-most in school history. But her offense left something to be desired — she averaged 5.7 points — and that was an area of emphasis during the off-season.

"From the day we had our last game in March, she spent probably on average an hour to an hour-and-a-half in the gym, four, five, six days a week in trying to develop as a shooter," Yori says.

Increased scoring from Johansen is "going to be really critical."

Most notable among the freshmen is 6-2 Chelsea Aubry from Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. She played for the Canadian national team in the World University Games in August.

She did "a really good job in her individual workouts," says Yori. "She's in great shape, and she's a skilled player. And she's a kid we're going to need to play for us."

With the 6-1 Johnson and the 6-4 Morse as the only returning post players, Aubry fills a significant need. "Chelsea will definitely see playing time for us," Yori says.

Jessica Gerhart, another freshman, also plays inside. The other freshmen are guards: Kiera Hardy, Heather Kephart, Andrea Lightfoot and Cortney Matthewis.

Despite the increased numbers, "we're still a little thin," says Yori.

"We will not be extremely deep. Although we have 11 kids, 11 aren't very many. There are a lot of programs that have 14 or 15 kids on scholarship, so we're not quite there yet."

Women's programs are allowed 15 scholarship players. "It will probably take us a couple of years to get to the point where we have a full allotment of kids on scholarship," she says.

Actually, Nebraska will have a 12th player available for practice. LaToya Howell, a 5-4 guard, is sitting out a mandatory redshirt after transferring from the Air Force Academy.

Yori says she isn't necessarily more comfortable at the start of her second season at Nebraska. "I think it's more of an opportunity. We have an opportunity to be a better basketball team."

There's plenty of room for improvement. The Huskers finished 8-20 last season, including 1-15 in the Big 12.

"We just want to keep getting better," Yori says. "We know that we probably are not going to be picked near the top (of the conference). We understand that. We're probably going to be picked 11th or 12th in the league, I would anticipate. But we have a chance to be better than that."

The Huskers need to stay healthy, of course, and some of the newcomers have to make significant contributions. If those things happen, "we're going to be better, no question," says Yori. "We're going to work to compete in every game, and we definitely think we're going to be more competitive.

"We hope that correlates with more wins." ■

SERIES OVER IN FOUR

The Nebraska baseball team's annual, best-of-five Red-White World Series to conclude fall practice went only four games, with the Red team emerging, winning the first, third and fourth.

Despite going 0-for-4 in the second game, center fielder Jesse Boyer batted .438 with nine runs scored for the Red team, while catcher Chad Steele batted .562 for the White team.

Boyer, a junior transfer from Neosho County Community College, also drew nine walks and finished the series with a .640 on-base percentage.

Steele and White team center fielder Braden Keith each had nine hits in the four games.

The White team's lone victory was a combined one-hit shutout by Justin Pekarek and Mike Harmelink. Pekarek worked seven innings, allowing only a single to Kevin Belcher.

Jesse Boyer

Senior catcher John Grose drove in eight runs, including five in the Reds' 13-2 opening victory. Grose, Belcher and sophomore third baseman Alex Gordon hit home runs during the series.

Grose's home run came with the bases loaded.

Shortstop Joe Simokaitis played defensively for both teams during the series.

Curtis Ledbetter, Daniel Bruce and Brandon Fusilier as well as pitchers Tony Watson, Dustin Timm, Mike McDonald and Brian Duensing all were held out of the games because of injuries.

Game 1: Reds 13, Whites 2 (WP — Zach Kroenke, LP — Phil Shirek)

Game 2: Whites 5, Reds 0 (WP — Pekarek, LP — Brett Jensen)

Game 3: Reds 13, Whites 6 (WP — Matt Pike, LP — Quinton Robertson)

Game 4: Reds 9, White 5 (WP — Schoeninger, LP — Jon Klausing)

HOOPS RECRUIT

According to newspaper reports in Lincoln and Omaha, the Nebraska men's basketball team has added a second member to its 2004 recruiting class: Dillion Sneed, a 6-foot-7, 235-pound forward from Chicago by way of Colby, Kan., Community College.

Sneed has reported given the Cornhuskers an oral commitment following a freshman season during which he averaged 3 points and 2 rebounds off the bench for a 26-7 team. He played behind a junior college All-American, Coach Brian Ostermann told the Lincoln Journal Star.

The Cornhuskers don't have a player like Sneed, "in terms of that athletic power guy. He's a bull," Ostermann told the Journal Star, noting that Sneed has been "under the radar."

Oral commitments are non-binding. Nebraska also has received an oral commitment for the 2004 recruiting class from 6-5, 194-pound Joe McCray from Fort Lauderdale, Fla. ■

QUICK HITS

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

BAD HAIR DAY

As part of his initiation as a freshman, Bo Ruud had to shave his head, says his brother, junior middle linebacker Barrett Ruud. "He was pretty attached to his hair, kind of like I was at the time," Barrett says. "When I got here, I was in the process of growing my hair out, too."

Veteran players "made me cut my hair," says Barrett. Bo "was kind of growing his hair out, and he was starting to get attached to it, so he was pretty upset about it."

Even though Bo Ruud, a Buck linebacker, is being redshirted, he is among the true freshmen who have moved into the varsity locker room. "He's doing pretty well," Barrett says.

"He's gotten to work a lot with the first couple of units on defense."

Bo needs to work in the weight room, according to his brother.

"Probably the biggest weakness in his game right now is his lack of strength because he had a little problem with his back and couldn't work out like he wanted to," says Barrett. "So definitely, I think the key for him will be the winter and summer off-season, getting more strength. He's pretty athletic right now. He just has to get a little stronger."

Losing his hair had nothing to do with his strength.

COACH COLMAN

Former Cornhusker linebacker Doug Colman is in his first season as the football coach at Absegami High School in Galloway, N.J. Absegami won in Colman's coaching debut, defeating Egg Harbor Township 34-20. Actually, Absegami's first scheduled game was against Cardinal O'Hara High in Springfield, Pa. But Cardinal O'Hara forfeited the game.

"You kind of live yourself through them (players)," Colman told The Press of Atlantic City.

Colman was a four-year letterman at Nebraska and was a starter at middle linebacker, along with Phil Ellis, on the Cornhusker national championship teams in 1994 and 1995.

He played in the NFL for the New York Giants and Tennessee Titans.

His father, Wayne, was his football coach at Ocean City, N.J., High School.

PART OF FOOTBALL

Nebraska has dealt with injuries on both sides of the ball this season. But "that's just part of football," says defensive coordinator Bo Pelini. "Whoever you have available that week has to be ready to line up and play at a high level. You can't control injuries. It's not something you can plan for. It's something you have to react to and be ready to make adjustments. Guys have to step up.

"They've got to earn their scholarship, earn their way, make plays when they get in there. That's the bottom line. If you don't, you're going to have problems. You've got to coach up the guys that are in there and get them to step up, play at a high level. That's just the nature of the game."

BRIEFLY

— Sophomore offensive tackle Richie Incognito serves as the Cornhuskers' long-snapper, a skill he developed under the direction of Ben Bernard, a former assistant at Mountain Ridge High School in Glendale, Ariz. Two other students of Bernard at Mountain Ridge High are collegiate long-snappers, Arizona State's Jason Burke and Southern California's Matt Hayward.

Bernard also coached Baltimore Ravens long-snapper Joe Maese, a graduate of Glendale's Cortez High School. Maese was the first true long-snapper ever drafted by the Ravens. He was a sixth-round pick, the 192nd player drafted, in 2001.

Bernard was a "good coach," says Incognito. Obviously.

— Credit ESPN college football analyst Kirk Herbstreit with an assist in the hiring of Cornhusker defensive coordinator Bo Pelini. Herbstreit told the Omaha World-Herald that Pelini asked him what he thought about the Nebraska job, and "I told him I thought it was a great opportunity."

Herbstreit was a sophomore on the 1990 Ohio State team for which Pelini was a senior captain. Herbstreit also was the first member of the first recruiting class put together by Nebraska Athletic Director Steve Pederson when he served as the Buckeyes' recruiting coordinator.

— For the second consecutive season, Nebraska ranked sixth in the NCAA in home baseball attendance, drawing 150,459 for 35 home dates in 2003. The Cornhuskers drew an average of 4,299 per home game, breaking the previous school single-season record of 4,110, set in 2002.

In addition to its success, Nebraska has benefited significantly from the opening of Hawks Field. Nebraska uses actual turnstile attendance, not tickets sold.

— Nebraska women's basketball Coach Connie Yori has reportedly received an oral commitment from Sarah White, a 6-foot forward from Topeka, Kan. White averaged 20.8 points and seven rebounds as a junior at Washburn Rural High School and earned all-state recognition in the large-schools class.

She "can really get up and down the floor," her coach, Bill Annan, told the Omaha World-Herald. ■

Adjusted Goal

Sixth-year senior Lohr is realistic about where he is in relationship to those who play his position

Mike BABCOCK

JEFF JAMROG HAS SUGGESTED that Jason Lohr consider a career in coaching. He would be an "excellent coach," Jamrog says. "He has a tremendous work ethic, (and) passion for the game."

Without the work ethic and passion, Lohr's playing career would have ended a year ago, if not before, as a result of injuries to his left knee. In the third game of the 2001 season, against Notre Dame, he suffered a torn ACL, and during preseason practice in 2002, he suffered a torn LCL.

In order to return this fall, he had to petition the NCAA for a sixth season of eligibility, an increasingly common process designed to temper the effects of serious injuries. Other Cornhuskers have gone the same route, including John Gibson, Jason Schwab and Dan Hadenfeldt.

Lohr could have walked away after five years. But football is important to him. "Obviously, you don't come back for your sixth year if football wasn't important," says Jamrog.

However, it probably isn't important enough for Lohr to consider being a coach.

"They put a lot of time in," he says. "I don't know if I could be away from my family that much. I'm away from it enough as it is now. That would be too much time for me."

Ironically, he probably wouldn't be playing still if not for his wife, Jenny. She helped him get through the knee surgeries and rehabilitation, and encouraged him to return for the sixth season. "She said, 'You probably won't forgive yourself if you didn't try one more time,' " he says.

Jason Lohr has been pictured on schedule cards three times.

That despite the fact "she didn't care," he says. "She's just supportive in whatever I do."

What a healthy Lohr did was establish the foundation for what promised to be an outstanding senior season at nose tackle. He played as a true freshman, rotated with Steve Warren as a sophomore and started every game as a junior, finishing the regular season with a monster effort in the 34-32 victory against Colorado. He was credited with 11 tackles, including five unassisted and two for losses.

Jamrog, who joined Coach Frank Solich's staff that season, has regularly referred to that performance when describing Lohr's ability to control the line of scrimmage, pre-knee injuries.

The unknown going into this season, Jamrog says, was "what level could he get to?"

The situation was complicated by the fact Lohr couldn't start on the road back immediately because of a back problem that pre-dated the knee injuries and also required surgery. He missed two-a-days as well as the first three games, though he began practicing the week of the Penn State game.

He finally got back on the field against Southern Mississippi, more than two years after the first knee injury in the Notre Dame game. His knee was "a little sore," he says. "I expected it. But after I was out there for a few plays, I forgot about everything and just tried to make a play."

That was his goal, an adjusted goal really, to get back on the field and play. Initially, he wanted to regain his starting job, but "I had missed a lot of time," he says. "Being off two years, you're a little rusty. You can't just get back into it. Guys have put a lot more time into it than I have."

He is realistic about where he is in relationship to those who play his position.

"I knew I wasn't going to be able to play at the level I was before the two injuries, so I just had to take it a day at a time, progress from there. I don't want to think it'll be like that, but your mind tells you one thing and your body tells you another," he says. "You've just got to deal with it."

Now, he would be satisfied to stay healthy and contribute in some way.

His teammates joke with him, calling him "old man" and "grandpa," evidence of his five-plus years at Nebraska. He has his degree. And he's the last of the players recruited by Tom Osborne, who announced he would be stepping aside as head coach after Lohr made an oral commitment to the Cornhuskers.

He also has been pictured on three football schedule cards, an honor reserved for seniors. None of the previous six-year players were on three schedule cards because of when their injuries occurred.

Lohr is sure Jenny has all three. They stand in testament to his persistence and his passion for the game. "It's just great to see success stories like Jason's," says Jamrog.

"He's had excellent backing. It's a credit to him, his family."

He would make a good coach, were it not for his commitment to that family, which includes young sons Grant and Ryan. His career goal was once professional football.

Now it's "probably something in the business world," Lohr says. ■

***Mike Babcock** is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 20 years. Mike can be reached at MBABCOCK1@neb.rr.com or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.*

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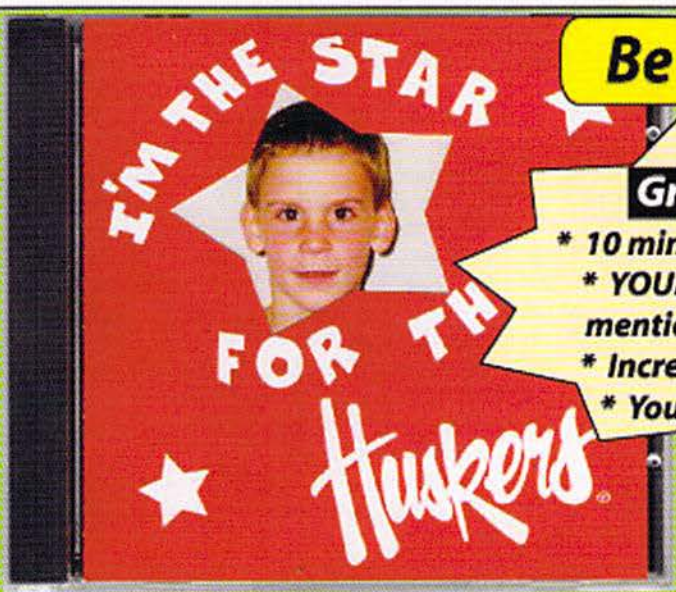

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Offensive Onslaught

Big 12 teams putting up impressive numbers as offensive fireworks trend continues

Curt McKEEVER

WHEN IT COMES TO PLAYING DEFENSE, Texas Tech has been about as effective as a matador's cape when a bull comes rushing through. Few teams in NCAA Division I-A football have units ranked lower than the Red Raiders.

But with quarterback B.J. Symons producing a yardage total that would put him higher than all but a few, the Red Raiders were one of two in the Big 12 unbeaten in conference play.

It's no wonder Colorado Coach Gary Barnett is rethinking the old-school belief that a great defense will shut down a high-powered unit.

"I see this as a wide-open grass basketball kind of sport, the way it's going now," Barnett said.

That's probably good for Colorado, which was worse than Tech on defense but still in the Big 12 North Division hunt after getting out on the fast break a little better than the Jayhawks during its 50-47 overtime win in Boulder on Oct. 11.

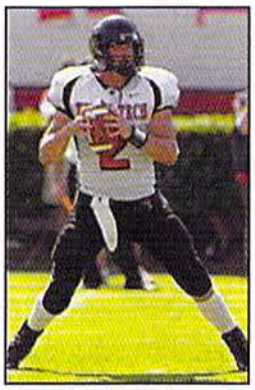
"At least right now, we can put some points on the board and keep the game interesting," Barnett said.

If we're to believe him, more teams will start placing a greater emphasis on that type of approach, too.

Barnett's theory is that NCAA restrictions on the amount of contact now allowed in spring practice has made it more difficult to teach the fundamentals of tackling. And against the multiple-formation offenses that seem to be popping up everywhere, defenses are required to have more athleticism.

"You don't find the big linebackers that can play," he said. "You play more with speed linebackers, guys who can cover on the corners. Trying to find guys who can also stand up and tackle, that's hard to do."

The average score of the six Big 12 games on Oct. 11 was 53-26. That was the highest for a full slate of intra-league contests since the conference began back in 1996.



Texas Tech's B.J. Symons is putting up huge numbers.

"We're not a three-yard-and-a-cloud-of-dust conference, as we were called in the old Big Eight," KU Coach Mark Mangino said.

As teams reached the halfway point of the season, the Big 12 featured six of the nation's top 26 offenses, and Oklahoma State and Texas, which ranked no better than seventh and eighth, respectively, in the league, were averaging 40 points.

Nebraska Coach Frank Solich noted that the league has an abundance of great quarterbacks, "guys that are able to hurt you in a lot of ways. You have to stop the quarterback as a running back in a lot of offenses."

He also cited the NCAA's 85-player scholarship limit.

"You can go back to spring ball if you like," he said in regard to Barnett's comment about producing skilled tacklers, "but I think some of it comes back to where teams are injury-wise. You just don't have the depth that you need to have, and that's with almost every program."

Even after giving up 452 yards to Missouri, the Huskers ranked second nationally on defense. But five of their final six opponents — Texas A&M, Texas, Kansas, Kansas State and Colorado — were in the top 26 on offense, or averaging 40 points.

Oklahoma, which had the third-ranked defense, had four opponents that fit that category (Colorado, Oklahoma State, A&M and Tech), while Kansas State's 12th-ranked defense had yet to face the explosiveness of Colorado and Kansas.

Tech was averaging a nation-best offensive total of more than 620 yards a game, while six other conference teams had more than 400. Last year, only three from the Big 12 were above 400.

Naturally, Symons, who by himself was producing more than 500 yards per game, hopes the offensive fireworks trend continues.

"I'm not really sure," he said when asked why the production is up in the league. "In our case, it definitely would be the talent level at the skill positions."

Texas A&M Coach Dennis Franchione would concur. The Red Raiders rolled up 489 yards and 59 points against the Aggies.

"They have such a scheme to move the ball around and get it to so many people and do it in so many ways," Franchione said. "It's almost kind of like a modern day version of the wishbone with their splits and the little receivers that are fast and quick and the trigger man that's such a vital cog in how it goes. They're difficult to defend."

If not impossible. Tech's lowest point total in its first six games was 42.

Teams "definitely take the field (in pre-game) saying how that stuff's not going to work today," Symons said of the Red Raiders' high-powered attack. "But as the game goes along, it sort of gets quiet. Toward the second half, the looks on the team we've played so far, it's like they want to get off the field (and) get to the locker room."

Kansas and Oklahoma also have been keyed by strong quarterback play.

KU's Bill Whittemore was fourth nationally with a 325-yard total offense average. And the Sooners' Jason White was completing nearly 70 percent of his passes and averaging almost 300 yards.

Iowa State Coach Dan McCarney is just thankful that Symons, Whittemore and White are seniors.

"The skill is just fantastic," McCarney said of Big 12 offenses. "Good luck trying to pick out who the all-conference players are based on what we've seen."

Good luck trying to stop the ones with the candidates, too. Even if you've got a defense that can wave a steel cape at the charging bulls. ■

Curt McKeever *is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the* Lincoln Journal Star. *In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams.*

Student Part A Big Part

Nebraska continues to build a solid reputation in the classroom

Terry DOUGLASS

IN THE WIN-AT-ALL-COSTS world of college football, actually graduating players sometimes becomes almost an afterthought.

However, while Nebraska has enjoyed a long track record of success on the gridiron, the Cornhuskers are continuing to build a solid reputation in the classroom. For instance, this year's team includes nine players who already have earned their college degrees.

That figure marks the most graduates prior to the start of a season Nebraska has had since Frank Solich took over as head football coach in 1998. Eleven more Huskers are on track to graduate in December.

Last season, five NU players entered the campaign as graduates. A total of 16 Huskers had earned degrees prior to the team's appearance in the Independence Bowl.

Solich said plenty of praise should go to the players, as well as Nebraska's academic support staff. Dennis Leblanc and Keith Zimmer, who share the title of associate AD for academic programs and student services, are another huge reason why the Cornhuskers' have enjoyed academic success.

But Solich also should share in the credit as 109 of 122 seniors have earned their degrees, including 25 of 29 last season. Nebraska has led the Big 12 Conference in four of the past six years in graduation rates, finishing second in 2000 and 2003.

"It is pretty well recognized around the country with what Dennis Leblanc and our academic staff has done over the years here at the University of Nebraska," Solich said. "You go through Tom Osborne's career and how important academics was to Tom, and that has just carried on over.

"We are just fortunate to have guys like Dennis and Keith involved in our academic program. They do a great job. Our players know exactly what is expected of them on the football field and in the classroom, and they respond as well as any players in the country."

Ex-Husker DeJuan Groce received his diploma last December.

The Huskers playing this season who have earned their college degrees include quarterback Jammal Lord (a communications studies major), Chad Buller (business administration), DeAntae Grixby (business administration), Patrick Kabongo (criminal justice), Jason Lohr (sociology), Phil Peetz (criminal justice), Jerrell Pippens (communications Studies), Pat Ricketts (business administration) and Steve Safranek (psychology).

Kabongo, a redshirt senior, played his junior season with a degree after graduating in three years in August of 2002.

Defensive coordinator Bo Pelini, who is in his first season of being associated with the Cornhuskers' football program, said he's been impressed with how NU handles academics.

"I think it's a testament to what this athletic department is all about," Pelini said. "They have tremendous academic support. The type of people that they bring in here are committed to doing well, not only on the football field, but in all sports. Really, they're students first. The student part of student-athlete is a big part around here."

Offensive coordinator Barney Cotton said the graduates also deserve praise for staying on task and earning their degrees. Especially considering the time commitment required by being part of the football program.

There's no arguing that Nebraska's athletes have many resources available to them to help in the classroom. However, few outside the program understand the time commitment it takes to play football for the Huskers.

The time drain doesn't end when football season is over. To maintain their status as one of the country's top programs, the Huskers must make a year-round commitment to the team. The hours spent in practices, strength training and conditioning can take a major bite out of a student-athlete's day.

"It's a great credit to those young men that have come to school and had that priority set straight," Cotton said. "I'd stack our guys up in the academic area against anybody in the country."

One might be inclined to think that all college football players care about is building their bodies and winning games on Saturdays. However, that simply isn't true.

Consider Lord, who claims that receiving his diploma will be the top achievement of his college career. The fifth-year senior graduated in August.

"It's a blessing," Lord said. "It really is a blessing. I don't think there's ever been anyone in my family to graduate from college. I'm probably the first one, so I'm very happy about that."

So was Lord's mother, Claudia.

"Mom was in tears," Lord said. "I think it was great for her to know that I had come here and that I was able to take it all the way and get my degree."

While Lord said his mother was thrilled that he earned his degree, she didn't push him.

"It was kind of understood," Lord said. "You go out on the football field to win, you go to college to get your degree. That's the way it's always been in my family."

Lord noted there are also side benefits to graduating prior to the start of the football season. He now has more time to devote to his sport, including time spent off the field studying videotape.

"It's really nice to have that out of the way," Lord said. "It just makes everything a lot easier."

I-back Josh Davis said the players in the program who have already earned their degrees are an inspiration to the rest of the team.

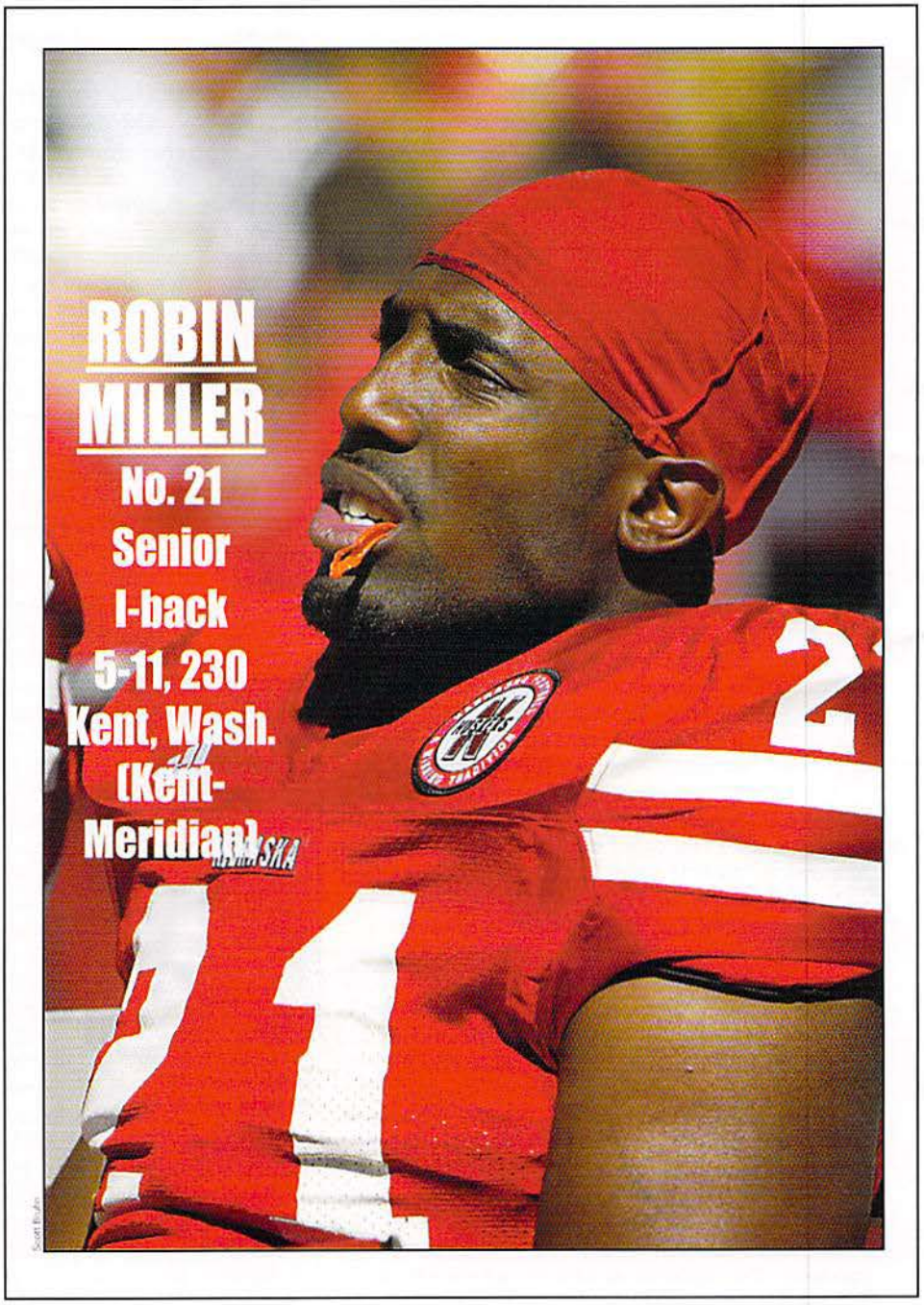
"We have a lot of guys stick to the books and really study hard," Davis said. "They either end up getting their diplomas early or right on time. It just shows how many guys work hard throughout school and the type of staff we have, who encourage academics. ■

Terry Douglass *is the sports editor of the Grand Island Independent. He can be reached at tdbbdouglass@earthlink.net.*

PLAYER PROFILE

Committed to NU

Senior I-back Miller has no regrets about picking Huskers



Robin Miller wears many hats, really.

On any given day, you can see him heading to class, wearing a Seattle Mariners hat, or a Los Angeles Dodgers hat, or a retro San Diego Padres hat from the early 1970s.

Nebraska's senior I-back is much too young to remember the Padres of the early 1970s, of course. But he likes the brown and yellow combination, "colors you don't really see," he says.

The only sports teams that come to mind, he says, are the University of Wyoming's. And he doesn't collect collegiate hats, anyway, just major league baseball hats.

He began the hat collection at Nebraska, arriving in the 1999 recruiting class with only a Mariners hat, which stands to reason considering he is from Kent, Wash., and grew up a Mariners fan. He even attended the Mariners' first game at SAFECO Field, on a senior trip at Kent-Meridian High School.

Even though he's a baseball fan, he didn't play baseball in high school. He excelled in football and ran track in the spring, though "if I could do it over, I'd probably play baseball," he says.

In any case, football was his sport. He played running back and outside linebacker, earning the most recognition as the former. His senior season, he rushed for 1,726 yards and 16 touchdowns.

That success earned him the scholarship, but hasn't been duplicated at Nebraska. He played in only eight games prior to this season, including none as a junior, and had carried only eight times.

Even so, "he has remained team-oriented," says running backs coach Tim Albin.

"A lot would have bailed out or transferred."

Neither was an option. Miller had a "long conversation" with his dad about seeing things through. "I signed a contract to be here and play football, and I'm going to honor what I signed," he says.

His up-beat attitude and continu-

ing commitment — he was a finalist for the Lifter of the Year award, evidence of his dedication in the weight room — have earned Albin's respect.

After he ran 47 yards for a touchdown near the end of the Southern Mississippi game, he was congratulated by his coach, who had to hurry down to the sideline from the coaches' box.

"I was so excited, and I think all of the running backs at the game were excited for Robin, what he's been through," Albin says. "I put my arm around him and said, 'Hey, man, that was great. Your mom and dad got to see you on national TV, all your boys back in Washington got to see you.' "

The touchdown run "was an ESPN highlight. Nah, nah, nah. Nah, nah, nah," Albin told him.

Miller has no regrets about picking Nebraska. "I'm glad for the opportunity to come here," he says. "Football isn't everything. You're not going to be playing football the rest of your life."

He is on schedule to graduate in the spring, with a degree in history.

He began as a business economics major but has found history to be more interesting, after taking a class that focused on World War II. His "specialty" is African-American history.

Miller might teach and coach, but "right now, I'm just trying to get it done," he says.

His hat collection has grown to a couple of dozen, representing nearly every major league team. The New York Yankees are a notable exception. "I'll never wear a Yankees hat," he says.

It has nothing to do with New York City, just the Yankees. He has a Mets hat.

He's not exactly sure of the basis for his aversion to the Yankees. It probably has something to do with their success, particularly against the Mariners. Whatever the reason, it puts him at good-natured odds with quarterback Jammal Lord, whose support of the Yankees includes wearing a hat.

"We always go back and forth about the Yankees," Miller says with a smile. "Whenever the Yankees lose, when they're on TV, I'll say something to Jammal about it."

"I'm glad for the opportunity to come here. Football isn't everything. You're not going to be playing football the rest of your life."
— Nebraska I-back Robin Miller

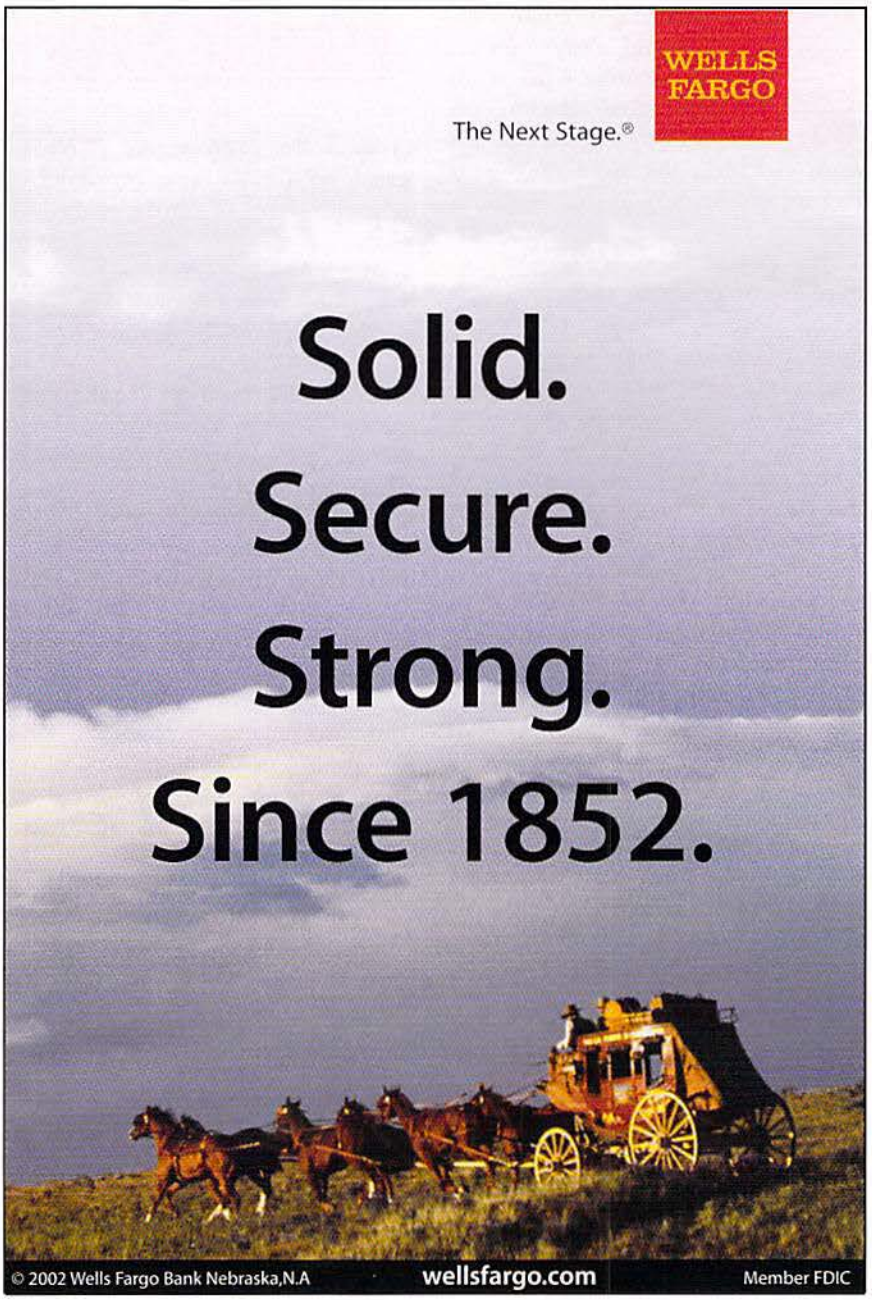
All of Miller's hats are fitted. Though his hat size is 7 3/8, he prefers a "bigger, more comfortable hat," so he looks for size 7 5/8, which is usually more difficult to find.

"Stores don't carry too many of the bigger hats," he says.

He arranges them on a desk, folded and lined up. Each day he picks one, making sure that he doesn't wear the same hat two days in a row — unless it's the Mariners hat.

On the day the Boston Red Sox defeated the Oakland A's in the American League divisional playoffs, Miller wore an A's hat, figuring the A's would have the best chance of beating the Yankees.

That despite the fact the A's "beat out my Mariners," he says. ■



It's Like M

Recruiting coordinator says Nebraska is constantly evaluating the process

By Mike Babcock

FEATURE STORY

Recruiting is a like marketing, says Scott Downing, who is in his first season on Coach Frank Solich's staff, coaching the tight ends and kickers and serving as the recruiting coordinator.

The task is "how we're going to market our program to young high school athletes," he says. "I think any good marketing plan is reviewed, up-dated, evaluated not only throughout the process but on a semi-annual basis. You're going to take a look at what you're doing and maybe tweak it here or there, maybe throw something out that you don't think has been productive for you."

You want to know "what kind of returns you are getting on that investment, so to speak, whatever you're investing your time and money in. So I think we're evaluating it all the time."

Downing discussed the marketing plan, recently, as Nebraska attempts to build a talent pool to assure that last season's 7-7 record won't be repeated in the immediate future.

Some of his observations regarding the plan follow.

What are the areas of emphasis?

"The most important thing is, you evaluate not only the areas you're going into but who you're going to put in that area. We certainly wanted to go into Texas. We wanted to be involved in all of the states that have Big 12 schools. Then there are certain areas of the country that provide a great recruiting base for a lot of schools. Two of those states are Florida and California. And historically, Nebraska has had great ties with the state of New Jersey. There are Husker bars, things like that, so it's really interesting.

"I wanted to look at where our strengths were historically. Where did we get our student-athletes? It's kind of a natural. It's pretty redundant, really. Where are you going to get the most exposure? You're going to have the exposure in the states you normally play in, the Big 12 states. Those are our base area. To me that was a slam dunk, plus the historical states like California, Florida and New Jersey.

"We get nearly 80 percent of our players from those states; that's going back five or 10 years."

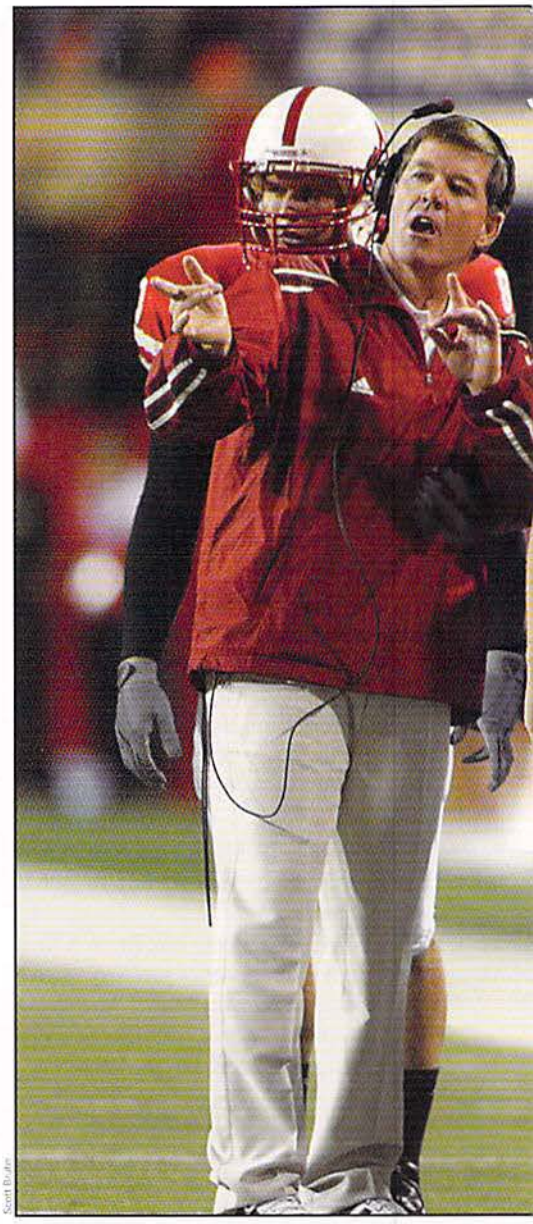
How have you assigned coaches to recruiting areas?

"See where they not only had roots but also where they fit best, a natural fit.

"In northern Texas, we put a guy like Turner Gill there. No. 1, he's been there for years. But No. 2, he's from there. It's easy for him to get around.

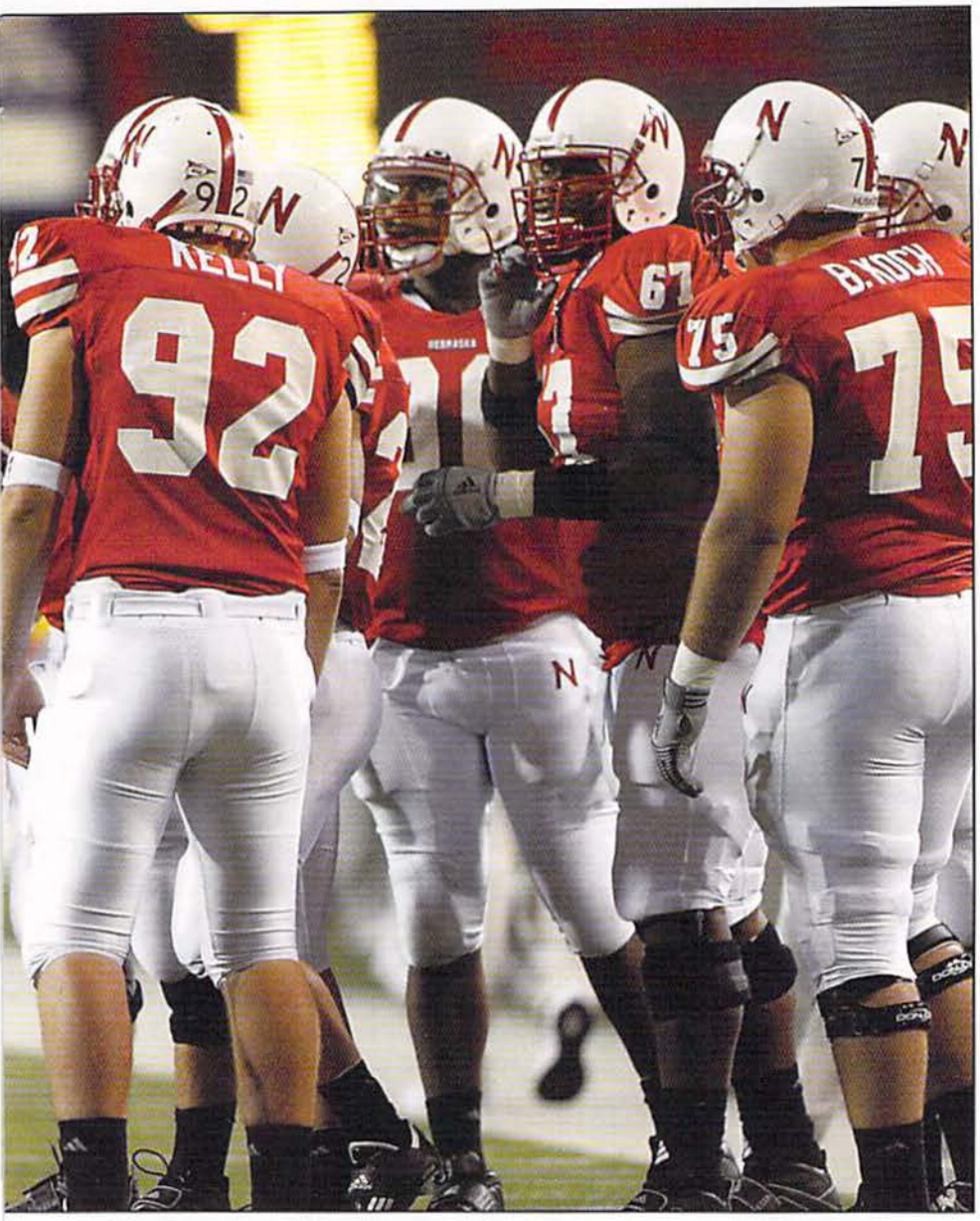
"Obviously, part of my area is Kansas and Missouri, which is home for me, always has been. I'm the only guy from that area on the staff. But then I took an area like northern California. I've never been there before. Why do I think I can go to northern California and draw some guys? No. 1, I'm from Nebraska and I'll get interest. And No. 2, I've been coaching for 24 years. If you've got someone who's a veteran recruiter, like we have, they can go in and start a relationship.

"We've had some different coaches in Florida over the years. So now



Scott Bruhn

Marketing



Scott Downing coaches the tight ends and kickers, in addition to his duties as Nebraska's recruiting coordinator. Downing, a graduate assistant and freshman coach at NU from 1984-86, returned this season after stints at Wyoming and Purdue.

with guys like Jeff Jamrog, who's been there for several years now, and then putting Bo Pelini in the northern part of Florida, I think it has really given us an established base there. I'm not sure, but this may be the first time we've had two coaches working Florida. It's been one coach handling the entire state."

To what other states have more than one coach been assigned?

"We have four in Texas full-time. Last year, it was two. In California there's two, last year one. What we've tried to do and I think it's a big change, which has allowed us to put more coaches in states, is, we've come up with two types of areas, a primary area and a secondary area.

"The primary area is where you need to know everybody. You're trying to know everybody in that state. You've seen them and know something about them. A secondary area, for example, would be Idaho. Why? Because Idaho has two Division I-A schools and a I-AA school. So there's a lot of college football in that state, with a very, very small population. If there is a national-caliber type guy, do we want to be in there? Yes. But do we want to scour that state? No. We can't spend all that time there.

"So through the grapevine of coaches or recruiting services, we'll identify a couple of guys there, take a look at them and if they're the type of guys we think would fit in at Nebraska, we'll go after them. If not, we'll move down the road. We're not going to look at 150 guys in Idaho."

Do you ignore some distant states, using Vermont as an example?

"Hopefully, through our national network of coaches and scouting services, we'd find out about him. We'd look at him. But the question you have in recruiting is, is that young man in Vermont so good that we can get in a plane and fly all the way to Vermont, over all those other players, to get him as opposed to going down the street to one of our local high schools and get the same kid?

"The reason you ask yourself that question is, is a kid from Vermont going to like it at Nebraska or is he going to get homesick and leave after a year, two years? I just remember Coach (Tom) Osborne always saying we want to be a dominant factor in recruiting within a 500-mile radius of Lincoln.

"In a 500-mile radius of Lincoln, there are a heck of a lot of schools and a heck of a lot of football players. So we want to know about all those kids in those areas.

"Of course, the reason we go to

California is because of the numbers of kids and Nebraska ties. There are a lot of former Nebraskans who live in California. There are a lot of former Nebraskans who live in Florida, too. You're looking at the numbers of Division I recruits produced by those states each and every year. The schools down there, the big three, can't take them all. You're going to be able to go down there and find a young man like Fabian Washington who wants to come to Nebraska."

"I don't think it's a hard sell. Kids love Nebraska and their parents love Nebraska when they find out about us."
— Recruiting Coordinator Scott Downing

Do you pay attention to suggestions from fans?

"I get e-mails every day from hundreds of people about kids. We try to do what we can to gather information. We try to follow up on every suggestion and try to even get back to the people who suggested them to us. Sometimes we're unable to do that because of the volume and time. But we certainly will check, particularly if it's in our base area. I'll ask our coaches, 'Have you heard about this guy?' They watch film constantly so there are very few guys, we think, that can slip through the cracks.

"Sometimes helpful fan suggestions work out. Other times, they're sure the young man wants to come to Nebraska, but we may have had personal contact with him on the phone and he said, 'Coach, there's no way I'm coming to Nebraska.' But the young men are too nice to tell the people who know about them that, 'No, I'm not going to go to Nebraska. I don't want to go to Nebraska.'

"Then the fans are frustrated because they think we're not putting any interest in these kids. But we have. It's just that we decided to move on because the young man didn't want us."

What effect has last season's 7-7 record had on recruiting?

"I don't think it's a tougher sell. Right now it's a situation where guys are in a wait-and-see mode. They like Nebraska. They like everything they've heard about Nebraska. They've been here and seen the place, loved it. Now they're saying, 'OK, I just want to make sure you guys are where you're at, that the 7-7 season of a year ago was just a blip on the radar screen, that Nebraska is still strong and is still a program to be dealt with on a national scale.' I think that's what we're seeing.

"I don't think it's a hard sell. Kids love Nebraska and their parents love Nebraska when they find out about us. But I think there is a hesitancy at this time because on the heels of a 7-7 season, we've got six new coaches here. That's a historical first at Nebraska. So young men are saying, 'I've seen what's happened like this at other schools, and it wasn't good. I want to see what Nebraska has.'

"Every time we go out and perform well as a football team, it puts another building block in our foundation of success that we're building for the future." ■

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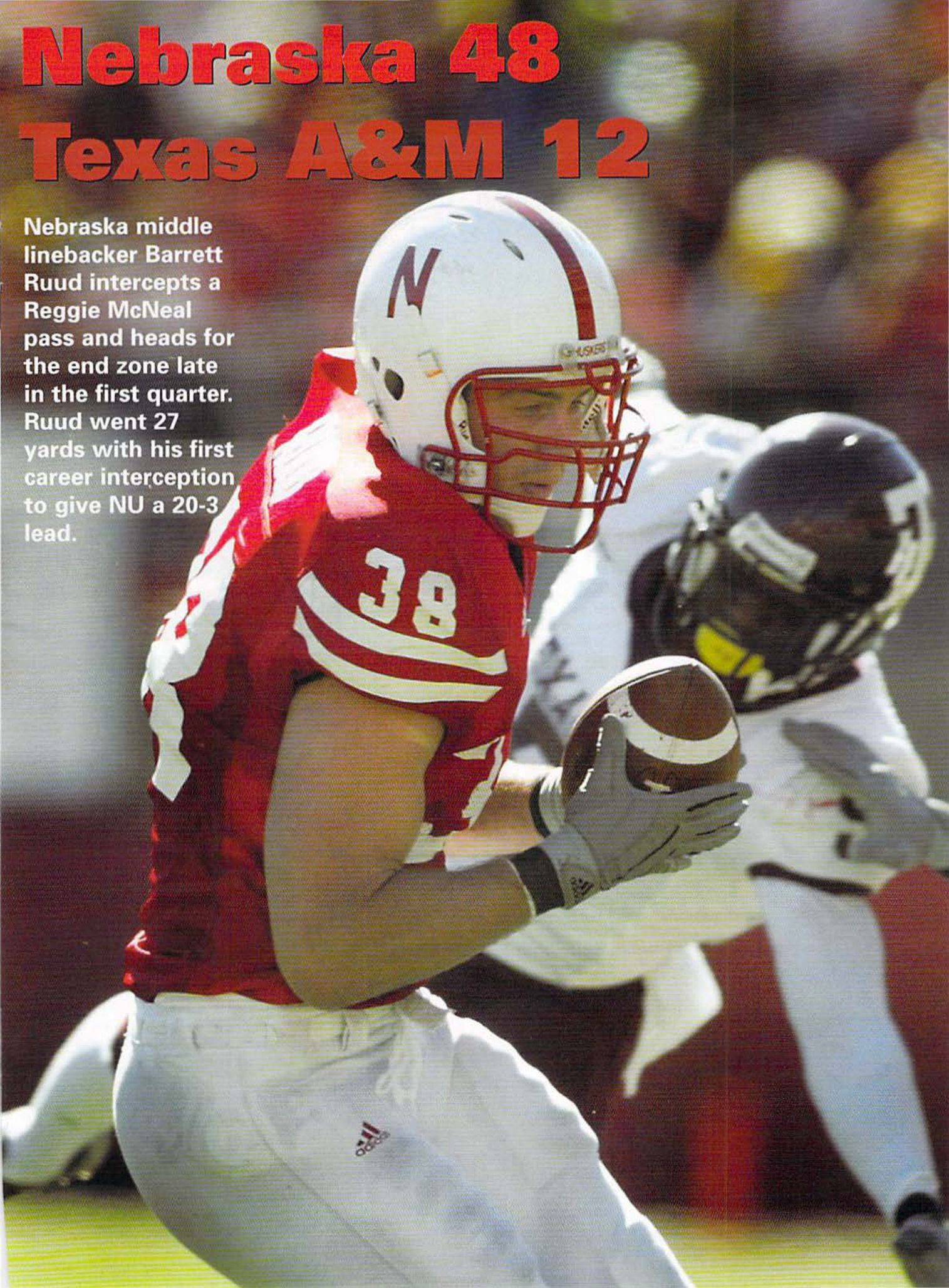


Nebraska middle linebacker Barrett Ruud intercepts a Reggie McNeal pass and heads for the end zone late in the first quarter. Ruud went 27 yards with his first career interception to give NU a 20-3 lead.

A week after a tough loss at Missouri, there was a lot to celebrate for Nebraska players and coaches. Center Josh Sewell (79, above) celebrates a Nebraska touchdown. Defensive end Trevor Johnson (88, near right) reacts after a big hit, and defensive coordinator Bo Pelini (far right) likes what he sees from the Husker defense.

Turnover T

This time, it's Huskers who benefit from turnover spike

GAME STORY

Just a hint of a smile tempered Frank Solich's stern countenance.

The coach couldn't be all that mad under the circumstances. And when he put the punishment to a vote in the locker room afterward, it was obvious he was more pleased than angry.

Even if Solich hadn't rescinded the dreaded "dirty workout" punishment, however, Titus Adams would have been all smiles following Nebraska's 48-12 victory against Texas A&M.

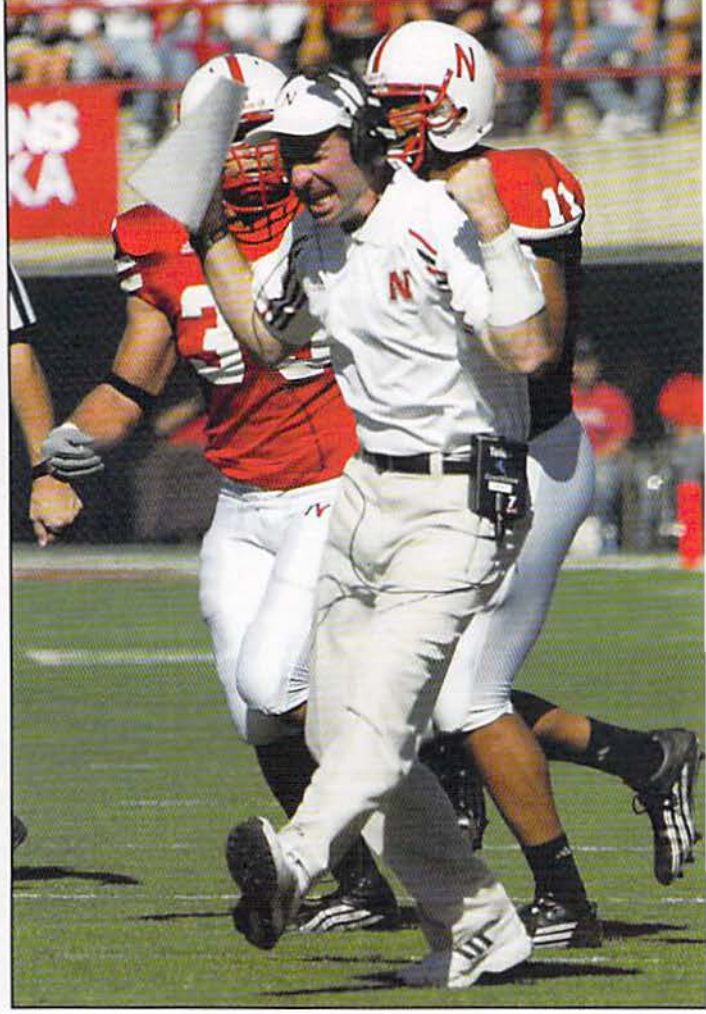
Adams' action had been instinctive, an outpouring of emotion. Besides, he saw it as his responsibility as a defensive lineman to spike the ball after intercepting it and scoring a touchdown.

"I did it for all the d-linemen," said Adams, who finished off the Cornhuskers' scoring on a 3-yard interception return with 3:09 remaining. "I was pretty excited."

The outcome had been determined when he reached up and plucked a Dustin Long pass from the air. But the interception provided an exclamation point to Nebraska's sixth victory, as well as characterizing it. The Cornhuskers forced eight turnovers, to tie the school record.

"We know what that's all about, if the turnover ratio gets out of whack," Solich said.

Nebraska needed to look no further than the previous week's loss at Missouri to see the effects of an out-of-whack turnover ratio. Five against the Tigers translated into its lone loss.



turnaround

By Mike Babcock
Photos by Scott Bruhn

Still, A&M's school-record-tying rash of turnovers wasn't entirely accidental.

"I thought they were forced turnovers," said Solich. "Our defense put a lot of pressure on and caused the ball to come out at times. A lot of credit goes to what those guys are all about."

For the record, the turnovers were, in order:

- Josh Bullocks' interception, forced by Trevor Johnson's hurry;
- Barrett Ruud's interception and touchdown return;
- Demorrio Williams' recovery of a fumble forced by Benard Thomas;
- Lornell McPherson's interception, forced by Johnson's pressure;
- Le Kevin Smith's recovery of a fumble caused by Ruud;
- Daniel Bullocks' recovery of a fumble he forced;
- Fabian Washington's interception;
- Adams' interception and touchdown return.

As it turned out, the first two interceptions provided Nebraska with all the points it would need, after quarterback Jammal Lord ran 22 yards for the Cornhuskers' first touchdown.

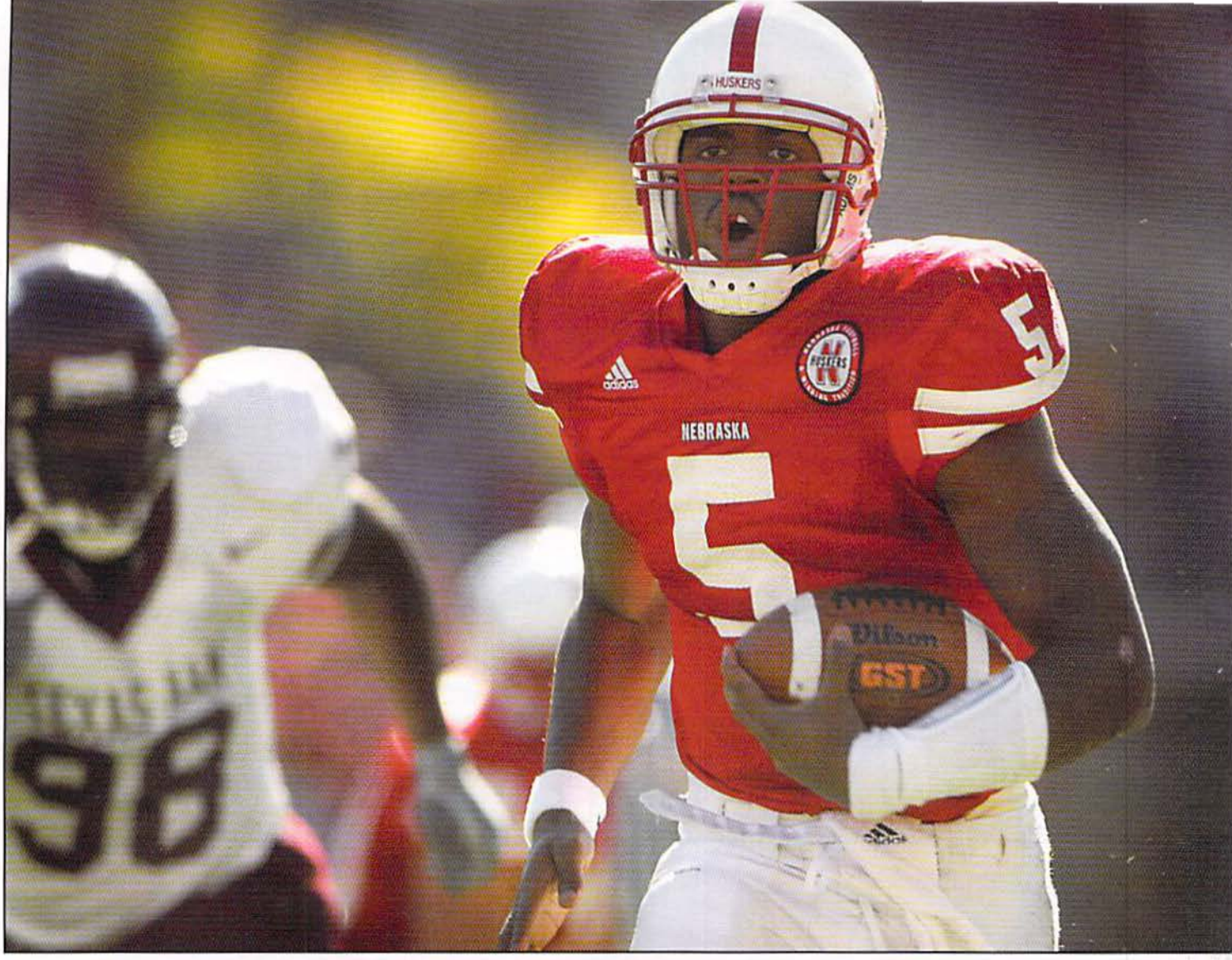
The touchdown, the first of two for Lord, capped a seven-play, 51-yard drive in response to a field goal that gave A&M a short-lived lead with 8:39 remaining in the first quarter.

Bullocks picked off the Aggies' Reggie McNeal on the first play of the subsequent series and returned the ball 13 yards to the A&M 33. Five plays later, David Horne scored.

Then came Ruud's interception return a minute and a half later, and the rout was on, though it wasn't apparent it would become a rout until Smith's fumble recovery early in the second half.

I-back Josh Davis scored on the next play, from 12 yards out.

"I'm not surprised any more when a game can get like this one got," said Solich, who had watched his team self-destruct the week



Nebraska senior quarterback Jammal Lord breaks free on his 22-yard touchdown run in the first quarter. He finished with 15 carries for 109

before, despite taking a 10-point lead into the fourth quarter.

A&M, in contrast, was coming off a 73-10 victory against Baylor, in which the Aggies had gained 719 yards. They managed only 244 against Nebraska, including 49 in the second half.

The Cornhuskers were focused in practice throughout the week, Solich said, and "all you can go on is the way your players respond. You've got to be at your best every game."

A team has to be at a physical and emotional peak, "week after week after week," he said. Based on that, "it was not a surprise they played hard. It was not a surprise they played well."

Nebraska avoided turnovers and was able to move the ball on the ground, rushing for 333 yards. "This was probably our most complete game in some ways," said Solich.

Lord was the game's leading rusher, with 109 yards on 15 carries. Horne gained 86 yards and Davis ran for 63. Horne and Davis carried 28 times between them.

"They took care of the ball, and that's the thing we did today that was excellent," Solich said. "We took very good care of the ball in the running game and the passing game."

Obviously, A&M did not. The Aggies had thrown only five interceptions in their first six games. But consistent pressure on McNeal and Dustin Long paid dividends for the Nebraska defense.

"We're going to play our style of defense. That's what creates turnovers," Cornhusker secondary coach Marvin Sanders said, adding that Adams' interception and touchdown drew attention to the defensive line, which deserved some of the credit for the more noticeable play of the defensive backs.

That Adams could make such a play wasn't surprising. "He's got really very good hands," said Solich. That's why he was used on offense in Nebraska's "jumbo" formations.

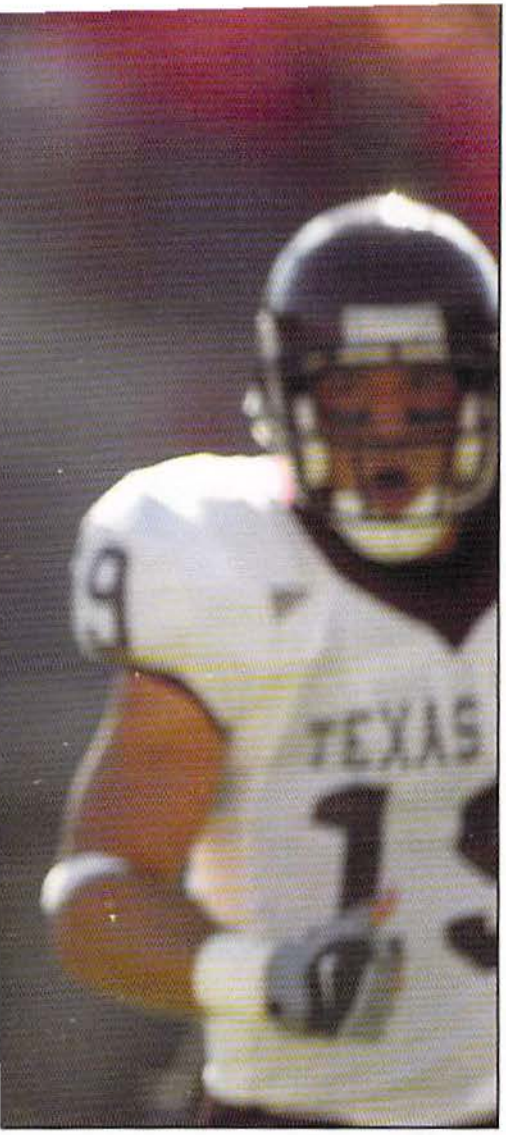
Even so, the post-touchdown celebration, which drew a 15-yard penalty, was inappropriate.

When Adams came off the field after scoring, Solich was waiting. He told the sophomore defensive end he had made a "great play" but that he should "think about a 'dirty workout.' "

A "dirty workout" would have required Adams to show up early Monday morning and do a lot of running, comparable to a week's worth of conditioning work, according to Adams.

"I did it once last year and I didn't want to do it again," he said.

Since the spike was for all of the defensive linemen, Adams asked who would join him at the "dirty workout" Monday morning. The



rds and two touchdowns.

linemen were unanimous in saying they would, he said.

But Solich put the discipline to a vote and Adams was given a reprieve.

Even if he would have had to run, however, "I would love to be Titus right now," Williams told reporters afterward. "I would do 'dirty workouts' for two weeks to spike the ball."

An interception is a lineman's dream, and so is scoring a touchdown, and Adams got both on one play, said Smith, who was ostensibly among those willing to join him in a "dirty workout.

"That was an NFL spike," offensive tackle Dan Vili Waldrop said. "I liked it."

When you win 48-12, you can appreciate such things.

But "according to Coach, I don't think I'm going to be doing it any- ■

GAME NOTES

Notes And Quotes From The Texas A&M Game

WHO'S WHO

Twins Josh Bullocks and Daniel Bullocks made their first appearance at a post-game interview session, together. Daniel stood to Josh's right, presumably.

Josh tied the school single-season record for pass interceptions with his seventh pick late in the first quarter. The other Cornhuskers with seven interceptions are Larry Wachholtz (1966), Dana Stephenson (1969) and Bill Kosch (1970). Josh's one-per-game average leads the nation.

Daniel, who has started at strong safety in place of an injured Philip Bland, received a black practice jersey on the Friday before the game. "It meant a lot to me," Daniel said.

"I don't know who was happier, Daniel or Josh," said secondary coach Marvin Sanders.

FIRST FOR RUUD

Middle linebacker Barrett Ruud scored his second touchdown of the season, on the 27-yard return of his first career interception with 1:45 remaining in a 20-point first quarter. He was the first Nebraska linebacker to return an interception for a score since Carlos Polk against Colorado in 2000.

The Cornhuskers were blitzing, and "I kind of just ran to the hot read," Ruud said. "Any time the defense scores, that's a tough blow on the (opposing) offense.

"It's definitely tough to bounce back from that."

The junior from Lincoln also was credited with his 202nd career tackle during the game, tying his father, Tom, for 23rd place on Nebraska's career tackles list.

GETTING HIS KICKS

Kyle Larson averaged a season-high 49.6 yards on nine punts, including three spotted inside the Texas A&M 10-yard line. "It has really come to where it is expected of him," Coach Frank Solich of the senior from Funk, Neb. "I don't know if there is a better punter around. There might be in terms of average, but when the pressure is on and you need a kick, when it needs to get done, he steps up and does it."

Larson has averaged 43.6 yards for the season, pinning opponents inside the 20 on 16 punts.

ONE-GAME SUSPENSION

Junior Kellen Huston, the No. 1 holder on placements and a back-up cornerback, was suspended for the game as a result of an incident in which he punched a fan as he was running off Faurot Field in Columbia, Mo., amidst the chaos that followed Missouri's 41-24 victory.

Huston made a statement following Tuesday's practice. "I sincerely regret what transpired Saturday evening in Columbia, Mo. My actions should not be a reflection on Coach Solich, the University of Nebraska or this football team. I would never intentionally bring harm to another individual."

Wide receiver Ross Pilkington filled in, mishandling the snap on the first extra-point attempt.

OTHER KICKING GAME CHANGES

Because of problems with kickoffs this season, Sam Koch, a sophomore walk-on from Seward, Neb., was given an opportunity against A&M and responded well, according to Solich.

In addition, true freshman Lane Kelly handled the punt snapping for the second week in a row. Kelly, a walk-on from Omaha Creighton Prep, has been the short-snapper all season.

TRADITION OF THE 12TH MAN

Texas A&M has its "12th Man" tradition. But Nebraska really did have 12 players on the field on two plays, less than two minutes apart during the third quarter. The first time nullified a Daniel Bullocks interception. The second time gave A&M a first down after it had kicked a field goal.

A 12-man alignment isn't the reason for the Cornhuskers' success at creating turnovers this season, however. The key is speed. "We have a defense with excellent team speed," said Solich.

HERE AND THERE

— With 109 rushing yards, quarterback Jammal Lord moved up to 20th on Nebraska's career-rushing list. He now has 2,185 rushing yards, the second-most among quarterbacks. Eric Crouch, the 2001 Heisman Trophy winner, is first among quarterbacks with 3,434 yards.

— Nebraska's next game against Iowa State at Memorial Stadium wasn't picked up in the Big 12's television package, but it will be telecast on pay-per-view. Crouch will serve as color analyst.

— Nebraska has now won 35 consecutive Homecoming games. Erin Bader and Jeffrey West, both seniors from Omaha, were crowned queen and king of Homecoming, respectively. ■

Scouting Report

2003 Schedule

1	Aug. 30	Oklahoma St. (6-1), W 17-7	1-0
2	Sept. 6	Utah State (1-6), W 31-7	2-0
3	Sept. 13	Penn State (2-5), W 18-10	3-0
4	Sept. 25	@ Southern Miss (3-3), W 38-14	4-0
5	Oct. 4	Troy State (4-3), W 30-0	5-0
6	Oct. 11	@ Missouri (5-2), L 41-24	5-1
7	Oct. 18	Texas A&M (3-4), W 48-12	6-1
8	Oct. 25	Iowa State (2-5), 11:40 a.m., PPV	
9	Nov. 1	@ Texas (5-2), TBA	
10	Nov. 8	@ Kansas (5-2), TBA	
11	Nov. 15	Kansas State (5-3), TBA	
12	Nov. 28	@ Colorado (3-4), 11 a.m., ABC	
	Dec. 7	Big 12 Championship at Kansas City, Mo., 7 p.m.	

Big 12 At A Glance

North	Conf.		All	
Nebraska	2	1	6	1
Kansas	2	1	5	2
Missouri	1	2	5	2
Kansas State	1	2	5	3
Colorado	1	2	3	4
Iowa State	0	3	2	5

South	Conf.		All	
Oklahoma	3	0	7	0
Oklahoma State	2	1	6	1
Texas	2	1	5	2
Texas Tech	2	1	5	2
Baylor	1	2	3	4
Texas A&M	1	2	3	4

Saturday, Oct. 18

Nebraska 48, Texas A&M 12
Kansas 28, Baylor 21
Kansas State 49, Colorado 20
Texas 40, Iowa State 19
Oklahoma 34, Missouri 13
Oklahoma State 51, Texas Tech 49

Saturday, Oct. 25

Iowa State at Nebraska
Texas at Baylor
Oklahoma at Colorado
Kansas at Kansas State
Texas Tech at Missouri
Oklahoma State at Texas A&M

Upcoming Opponents' Schedules

Iowa State (2-5)

Aug. 30	Northern Iowa, W 17-10
Sept. 6	Ohio, W 48-20
Sept. 13	Iowa, L 40-21
Sept. 27	@ Northern Illinois, L 24-16
Oct. 4	Oklahoma, L 53-7
Oct. 11	@ Texas Tech, L 52-21
Oct. 18	Texas, L 40-19
Oct. 25	@ Nebraska
Nov. 1	@ Missouri
Nov. 8	Kansas State
Nov. 15	Colorado
Nov. 22	@ Kansas

Texas (5-2)

Aug. 31	New Mexico State, W 66-7
Sept. 13	Arkansas, L 38-28
Sept. 20	@ Rice, W 48-7
Sept. 27	Tulane, W 63-18
Oct. 4	Kansas State, W 24-20
Oct. 11	Oklahoma @ Dallas, L 65-13
Oct. 18	@ Iowa State, W 40-19
Oct. 25	@ Baylor
Nov. 1	Nebraska
Nov. 8	@ Oklahoma State
Nov. 15	Texas Tech
Nov. 22	*@ Texas A&M*

Game 8

Iowa State
Oct. 25

Location: Ames, Iowa
Enrollment: 27,898
2003 record: 2-5
Coach: Dan McCarney, 9th year
Series: Nebraska leads 80-15-2

Time: 11:40 a.m., Pay-Per-View
Memorial Stadium, Lincoln, Neb.

Cyclone to Watch

Senior wide receiver Lane Danielsen scored both Iowa State touchdowns against Texas, one receiving (5 yards) and one rushing (2 yards). Danielsen now has 29 catches for 548 yards and four touchdowns. He is Iowa State's all-time leader in receiving yards and set the single-season record in 2002.

Quick Facts

The Cyclones have lost five straight since opening the season with victories over Northern Iowa and Ohio.

Junior quarterback Cris Love struggled against Texas in his first career start. Love was just 6-of-16 passing for 49 yards.

Former starter Austin Flynn replaced Love in the second half and led the Cyclones to scoring drives in his first three series.

Iowa State's leading tackler is strong safety JaMaine Billups, a senior from Omaha, Neb. Billups had 10 tackles against Texas to give him 68 for the season. He has returned an interception 77 yards for a touchdown..

Another Omahan, redshirt freshman Stevie Hicks, was the Cyclones' leading rusher against Texas with 11 carries for 67 yards.

On Deck

At Texas
Nov. 1

Location: Austin, Texas
Enrollment: 49,411
2003 record: 5-2
Coach: Mack Brown, 6th year
Series: Texas leads 5-4

Time: TBA
Texas Memorial Stadium, Austin

Tentative 2-Deeps

Nebraska Offense

WR X	2	Ross Pilkington*	6-0	190	So.
	28	Isaiah Fluellen	6-0	180	RFr.
LT	51	Richie Incognito*	6-3	300	So.
	69	Nick Povendo*	6-3	300	Jr.
LG	78	Mike Erickson**	6-4	305	Jr.
	72	Tim Green	6-4	325	Sr.
C	79	Josh Sewell*	6-2	300	Sr.
	64	Kurt Mann	6-3	290	RFr.
RG	71	Jake Andersen*	6-1	300	Jr.
	75	Brandon Koch	6-3	310	So.
RT	68	Dan Vili Waldrop***	6-5	350	Sr.
	68	Darren DeLone	6-5	320	Jr.
TE Y	11	Matt Herian*	6-5	240	So.
	82	Phil Peetz**	6-2	270	Sr.
QB	5	Jammal Lord***	6-2	220	Sr.
	12	Joe Dailey	6-0	200	Fr.
FB	4	Judd Davies***	6-0	250	Sr.
	45	Steve Kriewald**	5-10	250	Jr.
IB	1	Josh Davis**	5-11	205	Sr.
	9	David Horne*	6-0	200	So.
WR Z	10	Mark LeFlore*	5-11	185	So.
	13	Tim Liley*	6-2	205	Sr.
PK	27	David Dyches	6-1	190	Fr.

Nebraska Defense

LDE	5	Benard Thomas**	6-4	265	Jr.
	96	Titus Adams*	6-3	290	So.
NT	59	Ryon Bingham**	6-3	290	Sr.
	94	Patrick Kabongo***	6-6	320	Sr.
DT	66	La Kevin Smith*	6-2	305	So.
	74	Brandon Teamer	6-5	270	Fr.
RDE	88	Trevor Johnson***	6-4	255	Sr.
	90	Adam Carriker	6-6	260	RFr.
BLB	2	T.J. Hollowell***	6-0	230	Sr.
	11	Ira Cooper**	6-2	230	Jr.
MLB	38	Barrett Ruud*	6-2	240	Jr.
	54	Chad Sievers*	6-3	230	Jr.
WLB	7	Demorrio Williams	6-1	210	Sr.
	39	Chad Buller*	5-11	215	Sr.
LCB	3	Fabian Washington*	5-11	175	So.
	4	Terrell Butler*	5-10	190	Sr.
FS	20	Josh Bullocks*	6-1	195	So.
	31	Jerrell Pippens***	6-2	195	Sr.
SS	14	Daniel Bullocks*	6-1	200	So.
or	21	Philip Bland**	5-11	205	Jr.
RCB	28	Pat Ricketts***	5-11	180	Sr.
or	1	Lornell McPherson**	5-9	175	Jr.
P	19	Kyle Larson**	6-0	205	Sr.

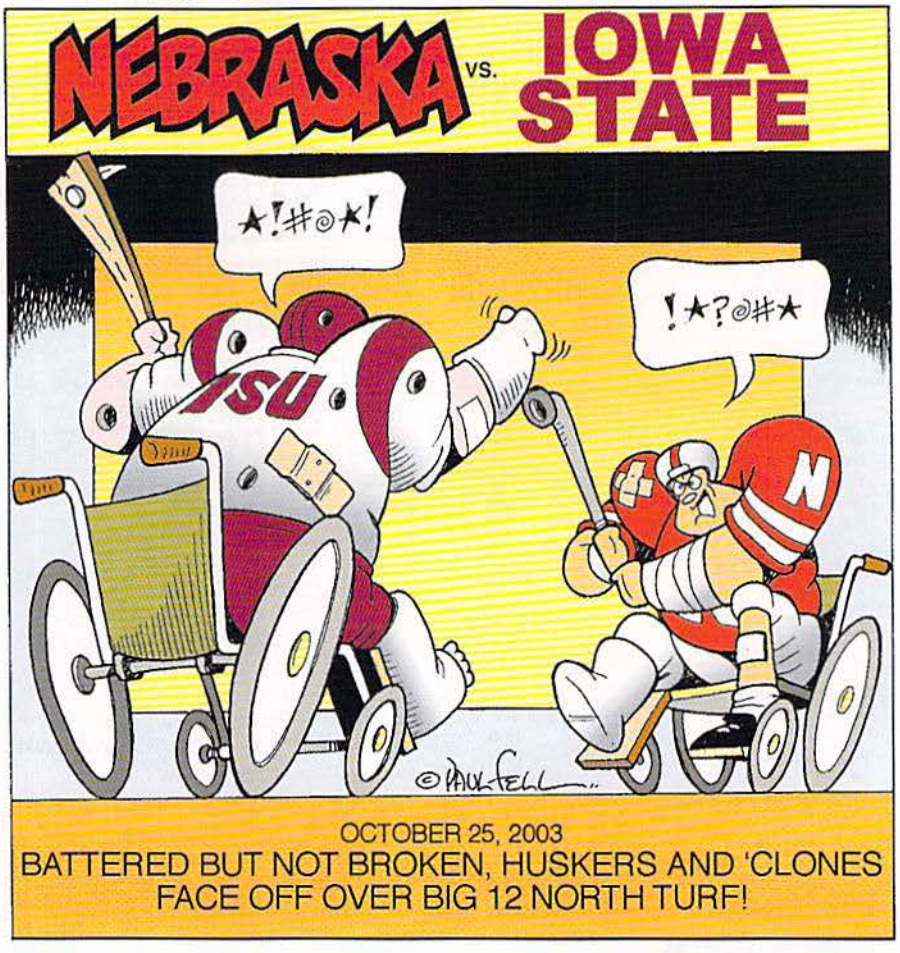
Iowa State Offense

SE	82	Lane Danielsen***	6-0	192	Sr.
	13	David Banks-Bursey*	5-8	172	Sr.
LT	71	Casey Shelton**	6-5	295	Sr.
	62	Johannes Egbers*	6-2	295	So.
LG	58	Seth Zehr	6-5	280	RFr.
	78	Colin Menard*	6-3	302	Sr.
C	65	Bob Montgomery***	6-2	306	Sr.
	79	Matt Bockes***	6-0	290	Sr.
RG	75	Aaron Brant	6-7	314	Fr.
	72	Kory Pence*	6-4	311	So.
RT	53	Cale Stubbe*	6-3	302	Jr.
	76	Chris O'Hollearn	6-4	270	So.
TE	86	James Wright	6-3	260	Jr.
	36	Brett Kellogg	6-2	255	Jr.
QB	8	Austin Flynn	6-1	186	RFr.
or	16	Chris Love	6-5	214	Jr.
TB	4	Michael Wagner***	5-7	188	Sr.
	27	Stevie Hicks	6-2	214	RFr.
FB	31	Ryon Koch	6-0	242	RFr.
	40	Derek Walters	5-10	235	Sr.
FL	83	Jamaul Montgomery***	6-0	197	Sr.
	81	Jon Davis	6-3	191	RFr.
PK	49	Adam Benika*	5-10	230	Sr.

Iowa State Defense

RE	84	Jason Berryman	6-2	230	Fr.
	29	Korey Smith	6-4	232	RFr.
DT	92	Jordan Carstens***	6-5	303	Sr.
or	52	Brent Curvey	6-0	288	Fr.
NG	66	Nick Leaders*	6-2	290	So.
	55	Matt Scherbring	6-3	325	Fr.
End	43	Cephus Johnson*	6-2	245	So.
	95	Beau Klaffke	6-3	275	RFr.
SLB	9	Nik Moser*	6-0	210	So.
	58	Erik Anderson**	6-0	229	Jr.
MLB	33	Brandon Brown**	6-0	233	Jr.
	47	Chris Whitaker***	5-10	232	Sr.
WLB	45	Joe Woodley***	5-11	227	Sr.
	46	Boyd Viers	6-1	223	So.
LCB	16	Harold Clewis***	5-9	193	Sr.
or	10	Johnny Smith***	5-11	170	Sr.
FS	18	Marc Timmons***	5-8	170	Sr.
	8	Steve Paris	6-1	195	So.
SS	6	JaMaine Billups***	5-9	208	Sr.
	42	Nick Linder**	5-10	187	Sr.
RCB	11	Ellis Hobbs**	5-7	183	Jr.
	3	Bryan Ollie***	5-8	178	Sr.
P	14	Tony Yelk**	6-0	201	Jr.

The Paul Fell Prediction



OCTOBER 25, 2003

BATTERED BUT NOT BROKEN, HUSKERS AND 'CLONES FACE OFF OVER BIG 12 NORTH TURF!

Picks

Brian Hill
Editor

The Cyclones have had trouble replacing versatile quarterback Seneca Wallace and have struggled to overcome injuries, inexperience and a tough schedule. Nebraska will be their sixth straight rated opponent. ISU come to Lincoln with five straight losses. On the surface, it might appear that the Huskers could get caught looking ahead to Texas. But not after what happened last year in Ames. **Nebraska 51, Iowa State 13**

Mike Babcock
Contributing Editor

Say what you want,

Iowa State At Nebraska

Nebraska should have won last season's game in Ames. So it's payback time for the Cornhuskers. Iowa State has struggled in scoring offense and scoring defense, which isn't a good combination. **Nebraska 42, Iowa State 10**

Terry Douglass
Grand Island Independent Sports Editor

Nebraska will be looking to make Iowa State victim No. 3 in the Cornhuskers' Revenge Tour of 2003. Look for the injury-ravaged Cyclones to join the ranks of Oklahoma State and Penn State as Nebraska atones for last year's loss at Ames. **Nebraska 42, Iowa State 13**

GAME STATS

NEBRASKA VS. TEXAS A&M

Oct. 18, 2003 • Memorial Stadium • Lincoln, Neb.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

Texas A&M	**3**	**0**	**3**	**6**	**—**	**12**
Nebraska	**20**	**0**	**14**	**14**	**—**	**48**

TEAM STATS

	TA	NU
First Downs	15	21
Rushing	6	18
Passing	6	2
Penalty	3	1
Rushing Attempts	37	68
Yards Gained Rushing	200	364
Yards Lost Rushing	65	31
Net Yards Rushing	135	333
Net Yards Passing	109	51
Passes Attempted	27	9
Passes Completed	9	3
Had Intercepted	5	0
Total Plays	64	77
Total Net Yards	244	384
Avg. Gain Per Play	3.8	5.0
Fumbles-Lost	4-3	2-0
Penalties-Yards	3-25	7-77
Punts-Yards	5-228	9-446
Avg. Per Punt	45.6	49.6
Punt Returns-Yards	4-41	2-12
Interceptions-Yards	0-0	5-43
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns-Yards	4-158	3-61
Possession Time	26:01	33:59

SCORING

TA — Todd Pegram 35-yard field goal

NU — Jammal Lord 22-yard run (team rush fumbled)

NU — David Horne 1-yard run (David Dyches kick)

NU — Barrett Ruud 27-yard interception return (Dyches kick)

NU — Josh Davis 12-yard run (Dyches kick)

NU — Lord 31-yard run (Dyches kick)

TA — Pegram 26-yard field goal

NU — Isaiah Fluellen 29-yard pass from Joe Dailey (Dyches kick)

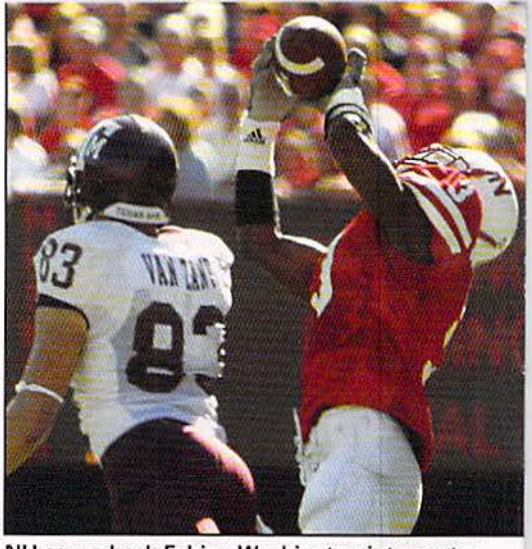
NU — Titus Adams 3-yard interception return (Sandro DeAngelis kick)

TA — Jason Carter 89-yard kickoff return (Pegram kick failed)

Att. — 77,604

Weather — sunny

Temp. — 63



Scott Bruhn

NU cornerback Fabian Washington intercepts a pass intended for A&M's Tim Van Zant.

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

NEBRASKA

RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Lord, J.	15	109	7.3	31	2
Horne, D.	14	86	6.1	19	1
Davis, J.	14	63	4.5	12	1
Ross, C.	7	22	3.1	9	0
Miller, R.	6	21	3.5	5	0
Kriewald, S.	1	16	16.0	16	0
Davies, J.	3	11	3.7	6	0
Fluellen, I.	1	6	6.0	6	0
Todd, D.	1	2	2.0	2	0
Grixby, D.	1	1	1.0	1	0
LeFlore, M.	1	0	0.0	0	0
Wingender, A.	1	-1	-1.0	0	0
Dailey, J.	3	-3	-1.0	5	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Lord, J.	12-7-0	28.6	22	0
Team	0-1-0	00.0	0	0
Dailey, J.	1-1-0	100.0	29	1

RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Fluellen, I.	2	42	21.0	29	1
Keiser, D.	1	9	9.0	9	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG	I20
Larson, K.	9	446	49.6	69	4

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Ross, C.	2	12	6.0	19	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	3	61	20.3	43	0

FIELD GOALS

Name	Att.	Good	Long
Dyches, D.	1	0	0

DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Ruud, B.	5	3	8	2-14	1-27	1-9
Williams, D.	4	2	6	0	0	0
Hollowell, T.	1	5	6	0	0	0
Johnson, T.	3	2	5	1-2	0	0
Bullocks, D.	3	2	5	1-1	0	0
Ricketts, P.	4	0	4	1-3	0	0
Bullocks, J.	0	4	4	0	1-13	0
Bingham, R.	0	4	4	0	0	0
McPherson, L.	3	0	3	0	1-0	0
Shanle, A.	2	1	3	1-14	0	1-14
Pippens, J.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Buller, C.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Thomas, B.	2	0	2	1-7	0	1-7
Smith, L.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Thorne, F.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Brungardt, M.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Washington, F.	0	1	1	0	1-0	0
Sievers, C.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Adams, T.	0	0	0	0	1-3	0

TEXAS A&M

RUSHING LEADERS

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
McNeal, R.	13	69	5.3	29	0
Carter, J.	2	49	24.5	28	0
Farmer, D.	5	22	4.4	8	0
Lewis, C.	9	21	2.3	15	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
McNeal, R.	7-19-3	36.8	77	0
Long, D.	2-8-2	25.0	32	0

RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Murphy, T.	3	30	10.0	14	0
Carter, J.	1	23	23.0	23	0
Riley, T.	1	19	19.0	19	0
Germany, Q.	1	12	12.0	12	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG	I20
Young, J.	5	228	45.6	69	2

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Van Zant, T.	4	41	10.2	16	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Carter, J.	2	113	56.5	89	1
Murphy, T.	2	45	22.5	30	0

DEFENSE LEADERS

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Appel, J.	5	4	9	1-2	0	0
Jones, B.	5	2	7	1-2	0	0
Manning, N.	5	2	7	1-1	0	0
Jones, R.	3	4	7	0	0	0
McDaniel, A.	0	7	7	1-1	0	0
Stickane, S.	4	1	5	0	0	0
Jasmin, M.	2	3	5	1-9	0	1-9
Smith, E.	0	5	5	0	0	0
Reed, B.	2	2	4	1-1	0	0
Weston, S.	2	2	4	0	0	0
Jackson, K.	3	0	3	0	0	0
Smith, L.	2	1	3	1-5	0	0
Warren, J.	2	1	3	1-3	0	0
Jolly, J.	1	2	3	0	0	0

2003 SEASON STATS

RUSHING LEADERS

Name	G	Att.	Yds.	YPG	TD
Lord, J.	7	124	560	80.0	8
Davis, J.	7	106	484	69.1	1
Horne, D.	7	91	403	57.6	4
Ross, C.	7	27	85	12.1	1
Dailey, J.	4	17	73	18.2	0
Miller, R.	5	10	65	13.0	1
Davies, J.	7	19	55	7.9	2
Kriewald, S.	7	6	41	5.9	0
LeFlore, M.	7	2	21	3.0	0
Fluellen, I.	5	3	17	3.4	0

PASSING

Name	G	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Lord, J.	7	47-85-4	55.3	650	3
Dailey, J.	4	7-10-1	70.0	101	2

RECEIVING

Name	G	No.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Herian, M.	7	14	277	19.8	39.6	1
Pilkington, R.	7	14	210	15.0	30.0	1
LeFlore, M.	7	12	117	9.8	16.7	1
Davis, J.	7	4	21	5.2	3.0	0
Fluellen, I.	5	3	85	28.3	17.0	2
Davies, J.	7	3	16	5.3	2.3	0
Keiser, D.	7	1	9	9.0	1.3	0
Kriewald, S.	7	1	6	6.0	0.9	0
Horne, D.	7	1	5	5.0	0.7	0
Liley, T.	7	1	5	5.0	0.7	0

FIELD GOALS

Name	G	Att.	Good	Long
Dyches, D.	6	15	11	41
DeAngelis, S.	6	3	1	28

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG	I20
Larson, K.	35	1,525	43.6	71	16

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	21	195	9.3	30	0
Ross, C.	4	56	14.0	30	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	10	279	27.9	43	0
O'Holleran, J.	2	27	13.5	21	0

DEFENSIVE LEADERS

Name	G	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	S/Yds.
Ruud, B.	7	26	40	66	7-30	1-27	2.5-21
Williams, D.	7	43	23	66	9-44	1-2	6.5-40
Hollowell, T.	7	22	21	43	4-18	0	1-10
Washington, F.	7	22	14	36	2-3	3-14	0
Bullocks, D.	7	18	13	31	4-5	0	0
Johnson, T.	7	14	17	31	6-19	0	2-15
Bullocks, J.	7	10	17	27	0	7-93	0

TEAM STATISTICS

	NU	OPP
Total Offensive Yards	2,542	1,789
Plays	512	445
Average Per Play	5.0	4.0
Average Per Game	363.1	255.6
Net Rushing Yards	1,791	710
Attempts	415	228
TDs Rushing	17	6
Net Passing Yards	751	1,079
Completions	54	99
Average Per Pass	7.7	5.0
Average Per Catch	13.9	10.9
Average Per Game	107.3	154.1
TDs Passing	5	5
Sacks By-Yards	17-135	8-58
Fumbles-Lost	21-10	18-13
Penalties-Yards	51-377	43-330

Scoring	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT	TOT
NU	59	25	88	34	0	206
Opponents	24	24	3	40	0	91

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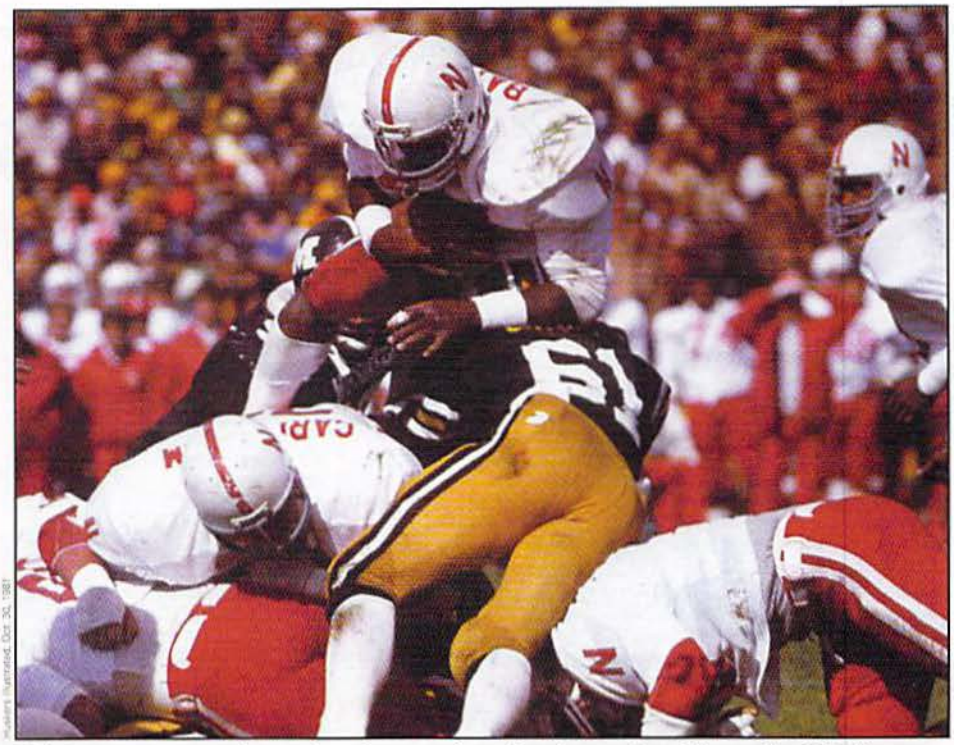
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Confidence Tested

Ex-Husker fullback started at the bottom of the depth chart

By Mike Babcock



Phil Bates goes over the top in a short yardage situation against Missouri in 1981. He scored the game's only touchdown in a 6-0 victory.

Phil Bates thought he was "pretty fast." But those around him were faster. And they were stronger, too. "They were benching 300 (pounds) and I couldn't do 250," he says.

Bates had just arrived at Nebraska for second-semester classes in 1979, transferring from Ellsworth, Iowa, Junior College. He didn't know anyone when winter conditioning began.

He also didn't know he had mistakenly been assigned to work out with the defensive backs, among them Russell Gary, Rodney Lewis and Paul Letcher. He was a fullback.

"I thought, 'I'm going to have a lot of work to do,' " he says.

Because he kept to himself, he didn't learn of his mistake until much later, after he moved in with Isaiah Hipp before the start of spring practice. Hipp, an I-back, filled him in.

Bates had walked on, with encouragement from Coach Tom Osborne and the help of former Cornhusker recruiting coordinator Rick Duval, who had helped him get into Waldorf, Iowa, Junior College following graduation from Omaha Burke High School and then into Ellsworth.

After a year at Waldorf, where his teammates included soon-to-be Cornhusker Henry Waechter, he was expelled and returned to Omaha. Duval called to ask why he was back home and told him he had a choice, he could enroll at Ellsworth or at Dodge City, Kan., Community College.

Bates located Dodge City on a map of Kansas and picked Ellsworth.

A year before, Bates had studied a map of the northwestern United States before turning down an offer from Warren Powers to attend Washington State. The former Nebraska assistant had accepted the head coach's job there. "I saw where Pullman (Wash.) was and said, 'No,' " Bates says.

Powers spent one season at Washington State and then moved on to Missouri. If he had accepted Powers' scholarship offer and gone to Pullman, "I would have been left there," says Bates.

Even so, Powers had been interested enough to offer a scholarship, something other major college coaches weren't willing to do. The offers he got were from smaller four-year schools.

The problem was, his high school credentials were limited. In two years at Omaha Central and one at Burke, he had been able to play in only "eight or nine games," total, because of injuries. And the one full season he did play, as a junior at Central, the team was didn't win a game.

Nevertheless, Bates saw himself playing running back at USC or Notre Dame.

Through it all, he had a sense of self that took shape during his two years in junior college and brought him to Nebraska. It enabled him to succeed as a Cornhusker, and afterward.

"We were taught you used sports to learn about life," says Bates, an account manager for Qwest Communications in the Phoenix area, "fighting back when things got hard."

At Nebraska, he learned from Osborne and from Mike Corgan, his gruff position coach, who carried the nickname "Iron Mike" for his no-nonsense, meet-tacklers-head-on approach.

Iron Mike called Bates a "bush league player" because he wasn't disciplined and made too many mistakes. Bates could handle such criticism because he was as stubborn as Corgan and because "I thought very positively," he says. "A lot of things roll off when you know who you are."

Corgan, with an omnipresent pipe, arms crossed and stern demeanor, didn't waste his criticism, directing it only at those who would play. When

Corgan didn't single you out, you were in trouble. He wasn't intimidated, however, Bates says. In fact, "it took a while for him to adjust to me."

Bates walked on, with Osborne's encouragement. He was on campus with Randy Brooks, another Omaha athlete, when Osborne approached. "We'd like you to walk on," Osborne said.

After watching a practice, Bates decided he was as good as the running backs he saw.

"I thought, 'I don't see anybody who's better than I am,' " says Bates.

That confidence was tested. He began spring practice in 1979 at the bottom of the depth chart, sixth team, which meant there might have been as many as 10 players ahead of him — more than one could share a position on the spring depth chart. At the end of spring, however, he was put on scholarship.

And though he redshirted that fall, he practiced with the top units until late in the season when defensive coordinator Lance Van Zandt persuaded Osborne to use him on the scout team, to get a better look. Bates enjoyed the variety, playing tight end and quarterback as well as running back.

He backed up seniors Andra Franklin and Jim Kotera in 1980, then started in 1981, scoring seven touchdowns and averaging 6 yards per carry, both single-season records for a fullback.

His most memorable touchdown came from 3 yards out with 23 seconds remaining to cap a 10-play, 64-yard drive and give the Cornhuskers a 6-0 victory at Missouri's Faurot Field.

He went to training camp with the Detroit Lions as a seventh-round draft pick and tried out for the Boston Breakers of the short-lived USFL. But neither worked out. And when the Kansas City Chiefs contacted him after he returned to Lincoln, he said thanks but no thanks.

"I had two kids and needed more stability" than professional football provided, he says. Besides, at that point in his football career, "I didn't feel like I had anything else to prove."

He worked in the insurance business, recruiting former Cornhusker teammates Neil Harris, Sammy Sims and Allen Lyday, and became involved in youth sports in Lincoln.

He returned to Nebraska to complete his undergraduate degree, with NCAA scholarship aid, working at the state penitentiary during that time. He worked in public radio in Lincoln, for the company that handled the yellow pages for Alltel and then moved to a similar position with Quest.

The late Corgan, no doubt, would be pleased with the way the former "bush league player" has been disciplined in taking on post-Nebraska challenges. Bates has come a long way since that first winter conditioning class with the defensive backs who were faster and stronger.

By the time he was finished at Nebraska, he was picked to the All-America Strength Team, a result not only of his own dedication in the weight room but also of Hipp's influence.

Hipp, who walked on from Chapin, S.C., set the standard in the weight room. He would have lifted on the day of the game if he had been allowed. "I learned from him," says Bates.

Despite his determination to succeed in football, his self-image was never tied up in athletics. "A lot of young men think only about playing football. I saw things in a different light," he says.

Scholarship or not, "I always felt I was a better person."

A better person and a fullback, not a defensive back. ■

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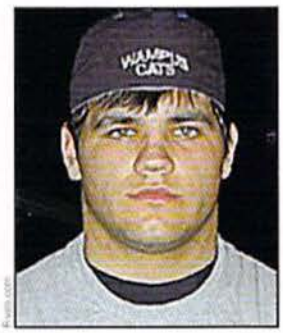
Top Fullbacks Considering NU

Top prospect from Arkansas among those eyeing Huskers

By Doug Horwich



Peyton Hillis of Conway, Ark., one of the nation's top fullback prospects, is considering Nebraska.

In the "old days," the majority of Nebraska's fullbacks were in-state walk-ons who were developed in the weight room and generally waited patiently behind veteran players before eventually starting in their junior or senior season.

Those days are likely over.

The Husker staff under former Coach Tom Osborne generally followed this strategy until the 1996 class, when they signed two scholarship fullbacks in Dan Alexander and Willie Miller. The program has continued to offer scholarships to fullbacks across the country on a regular basis since then.

Although some Nebraska fullbacks will, in all likelihood, continue to come from the walk-on program, Nebraska no longer depends on its walk-on program to produce fullback talent. The 2002 class is another example of this relatively new approach, as the staff signed two scholarship fullbacks in Nebraska native Dane Todd and Massachusetts native Grant Miller.

In 2004, the trend of signing scholarship fullbacks figures to continue, and the Husker staff is pursuing a handful of the nation's top prospects.

One of the most coveted fullback prospects in the nation this year is Peyton Hillis (6-foot-2, 240 pounds, 4.7-second 40-yard dash) from Conway, Ark. More than 15 schools have offered this top Arkansas prospect, including Nebraska, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, Alabama, Auburn, Colorado, Oklahoma State, East Carolina, Central Florida, Virginia, Mississippi and UCLA.

However, Hillis already has identified the schools he plans to focus on.

"I pretty much have things narrowed down to a top five or six," he said. "I'll likely take my visits to Nebraska, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, and either Alabama or Auburn. The rest of the schools are either too far from home or just don't fit me."

Perhaps not coincidentally, these are the programs that have had the most sustained and frequent contact with Hillis.

"I get a whole lot of calls," he said. "Oklahoma, Nebraska, Mississippi, Arkansas, Alabama — they all call every week. The Tennessee and Nebraska coaches have already been by the school this fall; pretty much all

NEBRASKA COMMITMENTS FOR 2004

Player	Hometown (school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Lance Brandenburgh	Overland Park, Kan. (St. Thomas Aquinas)	6-1	215	LB
Andy Christensen	Bennington, Neb.	6-3	275	DT
Allan Evridge	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-LaVista)	6-1	205	QB
Michael Keenan	Kansas City, Mo. (Oak Park)	6-2	220	LB
Maurice McClellan	Pawcatuck, Conn. (Stonington)	6-3	210	ATH
D.T. McDowell	Tucker, Ga.	6-1	190	QB
Terrence Nunn	Houston, Texas (Cypress Falls)	6-0	185	WR
Seth Olsen	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)	6-5	300	OL
Ty Steinkuhler	Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)	6-3	235	DE
Nathan Swift	Hutchinson, Minn.	6-3	190	WR

of the teams that have offered."

Hillis intends to take most, if not all, of his five allotted visits. One of those five visits is almost certain to go to Nebraska.

"I'll try to take as many of my visits as I can," Hillis said. "I've seen all of my favorites except for Nebraska. I kind of drove by there during the summer, but I really wasn't able to see the whole campus. The visits will be the deciding factor. Right now, no one team has an edge."

Hillis is being recruited for Nebraska by quarterbacks coach Turner Gill, and the two have developed a good relationship. "I like Turner Gill from Nebraska," Hillis said. "He's a real good guy who I can talk to about personal stuff."

Right now, Hillis is in somewhat of a quandary, because a number of programs, including Oklahoma, are trying to convince him that he should play running back instead of fullback. Hillis claims that he hasn't decided which position would best suit him at the next level.

"As far as style of offense for a fullback, I'd say Nebraska probably fits me best," he said, "but most of these teams want me to play halfback. So, right now, I don't really know."

Early playing time will be important for Hillis, and, as a result, he's studying the depth charts at the various programs that are recruiting him.

"With regard to playing or starting early, all of the schools promise the world," Hillis said. "It's hard to figure out who is telling the truth and who is lying. I'm also looking at the depth charts to see who each team is losing. At Nebraska, I know their starter is a senior. Behind him, they have a couple of freshman and a sophomore I think."

Hillis is receiving a lot of pressure from friends and family to play for the in-state Razorbacks, but he has kept an open mind.

"Everybody down here wants me to go to Arkansas," he said. "Right now, though, I don't care what other people think. I'll do whatever is best for me. My parents will support me, whatever I decide. They want me to be happy. My mom, though, she want her baby close to home."

Also a factor for Hillis will be the way in which each school intends to utilize his skills.

"As a fullback, I don't want to play

RECRUITING NOTES

California Player Favors Huskers

By Rick Shaw

The Huskers already hold commitments from 10 athletes for their recruiting class of 2004 and hope to sign at least 23 players to letters of intent in February.

Here is a look at four prospects that I believe favor the Huskers as we near the end of October.

Neil Brown, offensive line, 6-foot-2, 255-pounds, Buford, Ga. — Brown is a bit small as far as offensive linemen go, but plenty strong (495-pound squat) and plenty quick (4.84-second 40-yard dash). In fact, some schools are recruiting him to play on the defensive side of the ball. At this point in the season, Brown holds offers from Auburn, Mississippi State, Wake Forest, Vanderbilt and a handful of other schools, in addition to Nebraska. Brown plans to visit Nebraska in December, along with teammate Darius Walker, one of highest rated running back recruits in the country.

Cortney Grixby, cornerback, 5-9, 160, Omaha (Central), Neb. — Grixby is considered by most recruiting analysts as the top high school prospect in Nebraska this season. Rivals.com has him rated among the nation's top 100 high school players. Grixby grew up a Nebraska fan and has been cheering for brother DeAntae (current Husker fullback) for the past four seasons. Although he holds offers from UCLA, Colorado, Kansas State, and Kansas (among others), the Huskers' stiffest competition to sign Grixby will likely come from Iowa. Grixby took his first official visit of the recruiting process to Iowa City in late September and gave it a positive review.

"The atmosphere at Iowa was pretty good," Grixby said. "It was a lot like Nebraska, but nothing beats the 'Big Red' on game days. Nebraska has the 'Tunnel Walk' and all of the red. It's hard to beat that."

Grayson Gunheim, defensive end, 6-6, 240, Sebastopol (Analy), Calif. — Gunheim is a defensive end prospect from the West Coast with loads of athletic ability. He claims a 4.4-second 40 time and a 36-inch vertical leap. Playing tailback for Analy, Gunheim rushed for 465 yards and tallied seven touchdowns in the first three games of the season. Washington, Stanford, Oregon, Oregon State, Colorado, Arizona State, and USC are some of the other programs who are trying to lure Gunheim to their campuses. Gunheim's first official visit of the recruiting process is scheduled for Nov. 15, when he will visit Lincoln to watch the Huskers take on Kansas State.

Thomas Nyaoga, offensive guard, 6-5, 290, Mansfield, Texas — Nyaoga is one of the highest recruited offensive linemen in Texas. This run-blocking specialist with a 4.9 clocking in the 40 holds offers from Missouri, Kansas State, Oklahoma State, Baylor and others, in addition to Nebraska. He already has scheduled an official visit to Lincoln for Dec. 5 and admits that the Huskers might have the edge for his commitment at this stage of the recruiting process.

"I've been talking to Coach (Barney) Cotton from Nebraska," Nyaoga said. "He is the offensive coordinator and offensive line coach. That is a pretty good match up of duties. I talk to him every week. I'm looking forward to my visit to Lincoln in December." ■

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in an offense where I'd be a big blocking dummy," he said. "I want to be able to catch the ball and run, too.

"I'm looking for a good education where I go. I want to be able to get a good job after college, and I want to go to a school that will help me accomplish that. I'm also looking for a place where I'll feel at home."

Another highly recruited fullback who is showing a great deal of interest in Nebraska is Chris Pressley (6-1, 265, 4.6) from Woodbury, N.J. Pressley boasts nearly 30 scholarship offers, but he has narrowed his list to five finalists.

Chris Pressley

"My top five right now are Maryland, Stanford, Nebraska, Wisconsin and then Boston College or Tennessee," he said. "Right now, I like Maryland, Wisconsin and Nebraska best. I see myself going and playing at any of those places."

Pressley intends to take at least three or four official visits, but he's not opposed to making an early decision. "There's definitely a chance that I'd commit on one of my first visits," he said. "If I go to a school and feel comfortable and it feels like the place for me, I could commit.

"I'm spending time researching the academic situations at each school. I'll get a good feel for the atmosphere and the player/coach relationship when I visit. I'll make sure that it fits me. I'd like to see both Nebraska and Wisconsin, in addition to Maryland, before making a decision. Hopefully, I can have things wrapped up by some time in December."

Despite receiving pressure from the in-state Terrapins, Pressley has always loved Nebraska football and likes the way that the Huskers use the fullback.

"In all honestly, I'd probably fit best into Nebraska," he said. "Fullback is a true position there, and it's not at the other places. I feel that I'm a true fullback. I don't have to be the feature back in the offense. I like being the workhorse, with blocking and stuff. Nebraska is probably the best fit. I like how they utilize the fullback in their offensive scheme. They don't just have the fullback block there. They run the fullback and throw dump passes to them. They get them involved." ■

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INDIANA - Inside Indiana	26 issues, 2 yearbooks	$47	800-282-4648
IOWA - Voice of the Hawkeyes	23 issues, 2 yearbooks	$44.90	888-474-8669
IOWA STATE - Cyclone Illustrated	18 issues	$44.95	800-497-9562
KENTUCKY - The Cats' Pause	35 issues	$49.95	800-641-3302
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MIAMI - CaneSport	21 issues, first-class mail,	$52.95	800-635-2263
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MICHIGAN STATE - Spartan Magazine	18 issues	$39.95	800-732-6532
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TENNESSEE - Volunteers Magazine	12 issues, 2 guides	$34.97	865-974-1266
TEXAS - Horns Illustrated	9 magazines, 4 newsletters	$40	877-34-TEXAS
TEXAS A&M - Ags Illustrated	17 issues, 2 yearbooks	$42.90	800-467-6532
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VIRGINIA - Cavalier Corner	12 issues	$27.95	800-421-7751
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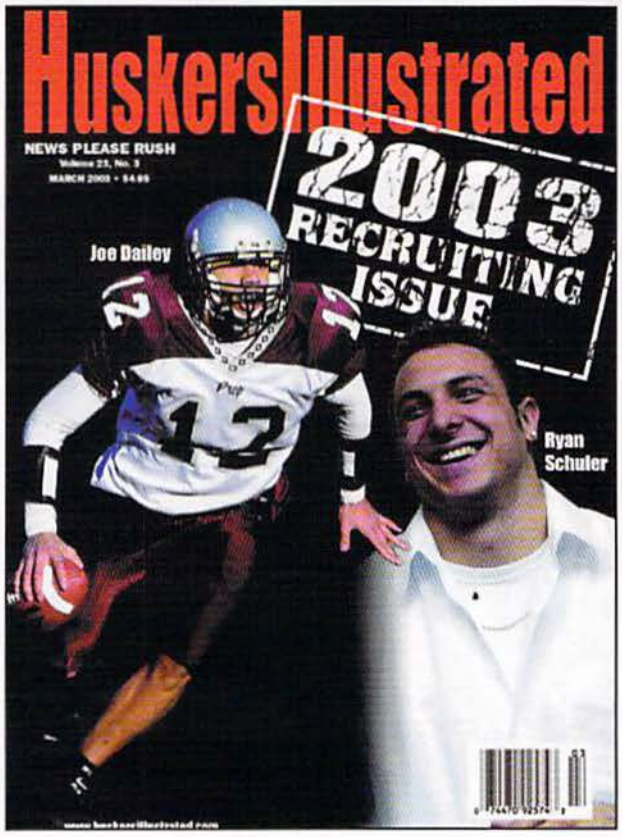

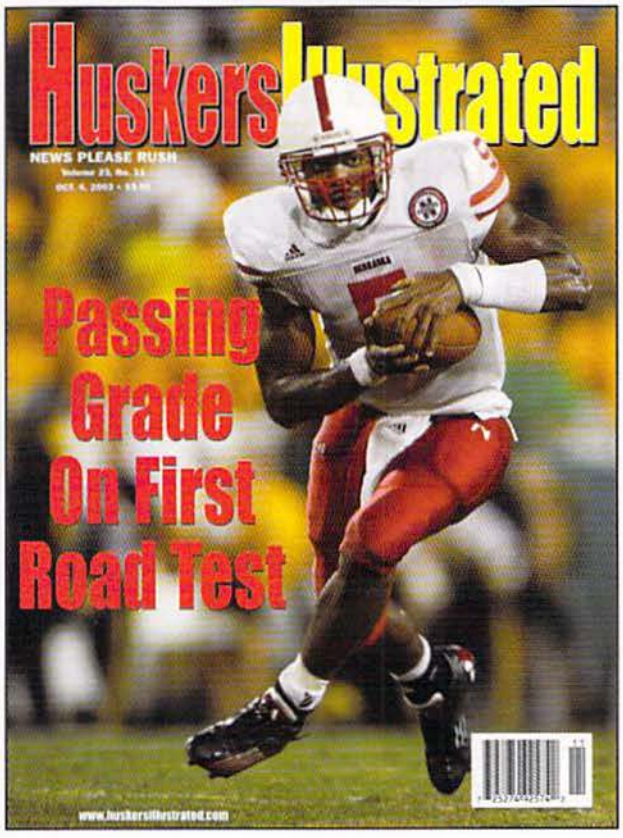

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Fast Track

NU's Houghtelling makes the step from small-town high school to big-time college volleyball

By Todd Henrichs

A year ago, Christina Houghtelling was a high school senior hitting only high balls and holding onto high hopes of becoming a Husker.

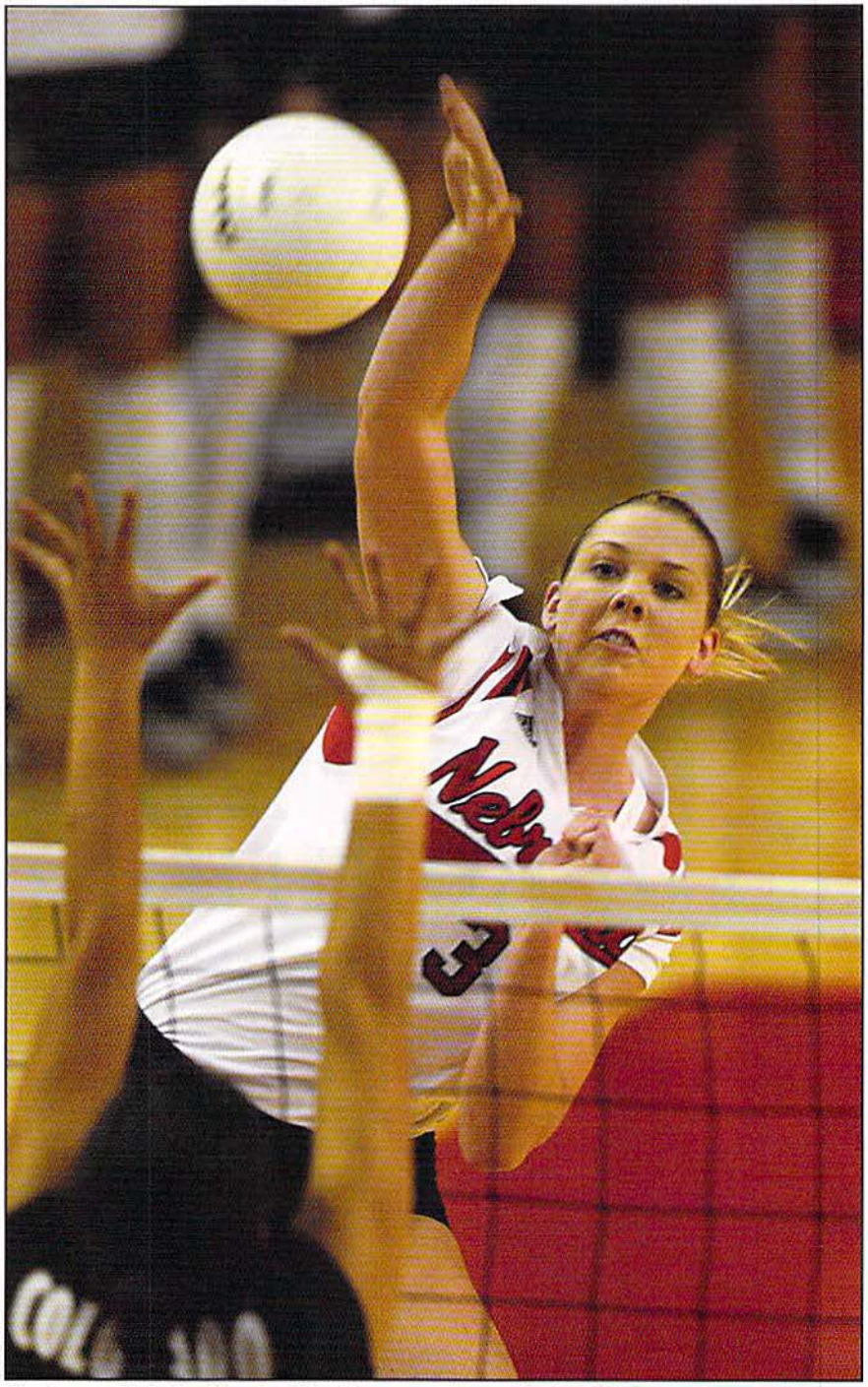
A Husker basketball player, that is.

Time naturally flies when you make the step from a small-town high school team to big-time college athletics, just as Houghtelling has in recent months. But how Houghtelling ended up a starter on Nebraska's top 10-ranked volleyball team is more than even she can completely comprehend.

"I am so surprised with where I'm at," said Houghtelling, who only considered playing volleyball in college after Nebraska made her a scholarship offer last fall. "I never expected it to be this big of a change. Now I don't think I could ever go back and play high school ball. It's so slow down there."

Despite being slowed by injuries, Houghtelling has been on a fast track in her freshman season with the Huskers. She played in all three of Nebraska's matches in the season-opening tournament at Illinois State and started for the first time at Tulane on Sept. 6, weeks before she had even taken her first college exam.

Nebraska Coach John Cook is so impressed with Houghtelling's potential that he doesn't even bother with tempering his enthusiasm. He compares her progress to that of Amber Holmquist, a three-time All-America middle blocker at Nebraska



Scott Bruhn

Freshman Christina Houghtelling became a fixture in the NU lineup after playing well off the bench against Georgia Tech Sept. 14.

who didn't start until midway through her freshman year.

Amazingly, however, it wasn't until a few months ago that Cook even expected Houghtelling to play this season.

"When we recruited her, we sold her on the fact she would need to redshirt," Cook said. "But when I saw her play in the Junior Olympics, after it was over, I went down and said, 'Forget the redshirt.' She blossomed when she got against the big competition."

That news thrilled Houghtelling, who credits legendary Nebraska high school coach Gwen Egbert for her rapid development. With no experience in club volleyball, Houghtelling joined Nebraska teammates Dani Busboom and Dani Mancuso on the Egbert-led team.

Busboom, now Nebraska's freshman setter, had played against Houghtelling in a state tournament match. But it wasn't until this summer that she too knew what she had in a future teammate.

"The first time I saw her play, I was like, 'There is no way they are going to redshirt Christina Houghtelling,'" Busboom said. "And she has improved a ton from the first day she was on the court in club. It's not even the same player."

Houghtelling first offered Husker fans a glimpse of her potential in a five-game loss to Georgia Tech on Sept. 12. She came off the bench to replace senior Sara Westling and provided nine kills to help Nebraska extend the match after losing the first two games.

Houghtelling earned a starting spot with the performance, and through her first five Big 12 Conference matches, she was hitting at a .368 efficiency. That mark ranked as the fourth-best of any player in the league.

Cook says Houghtelling has the potential to be a "special" player.

"She has one of the liveliest arms we've had in this program, and she just has great, great instincts as an athlete," Cook said. "But probably her greatest strength is she's a great competitor. When you talk to her, you'd never know there's a fire in there, but man, she steps up and competes."

That's why the tendonitis that causes pain in both of Houghtelling's knees is doubly frustrating for the freshman. Houghtelling, who has competed in three sports for as long as she can remember, says sitting out matches with her injury has been the hardest thing she's ever done in her career.

Houghtelling had to sit out back-to-back matches with the Big 12 season heating up and was unable to finish a five-game loss to Kansas State. That victory by the Wildcats likely set up a season-long dash for the conference championship.

While no one could imagine Houghtelling being in this position a year ago at Cambridge High School, all Houghtelling wants is to be around to help decide the finish.

"It's really hard for me because I've worked hard in practices and everything, and I've actually earned a starting spot," Houghtelling said. "Having to sit out and watch and knowing you could be out there, I have a hard time with that.

"I just want to play." ■

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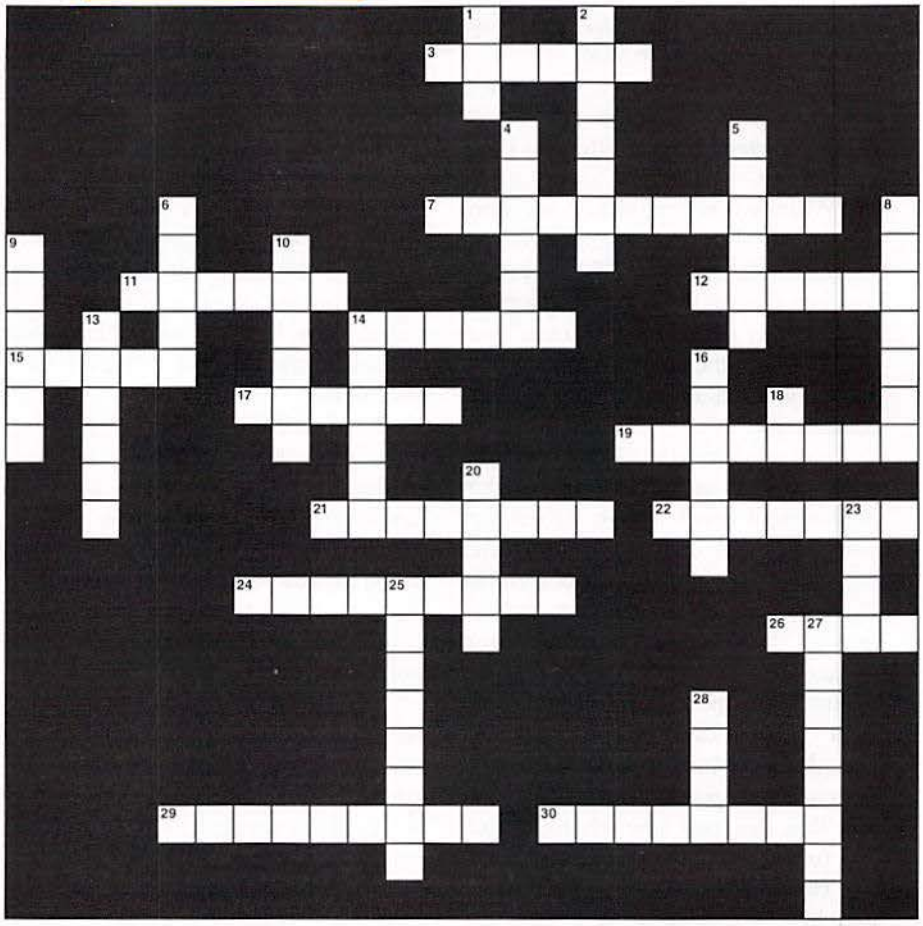

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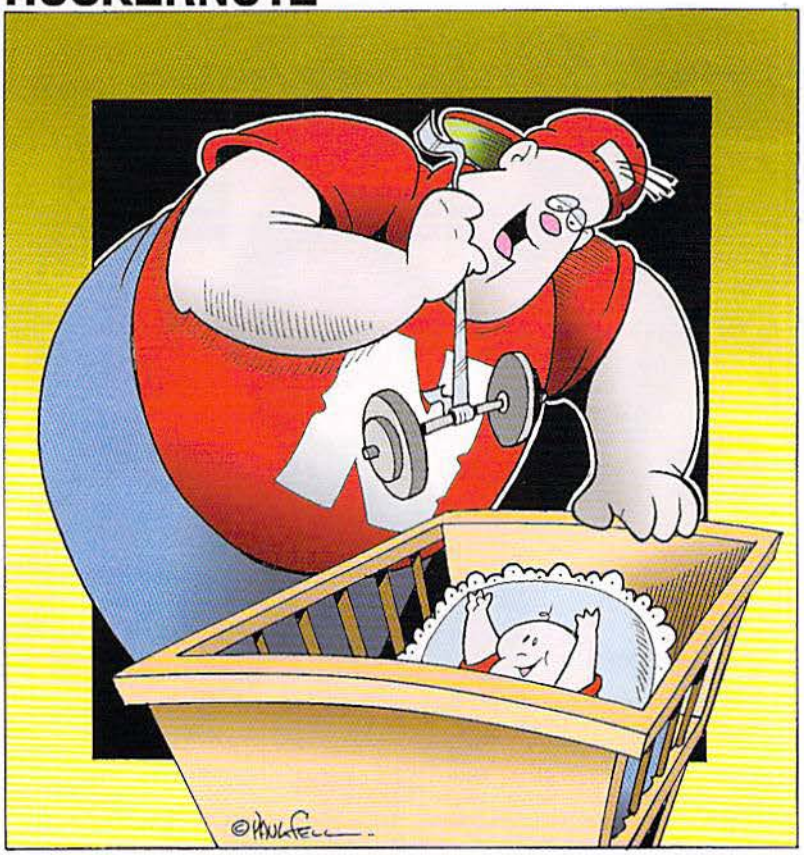

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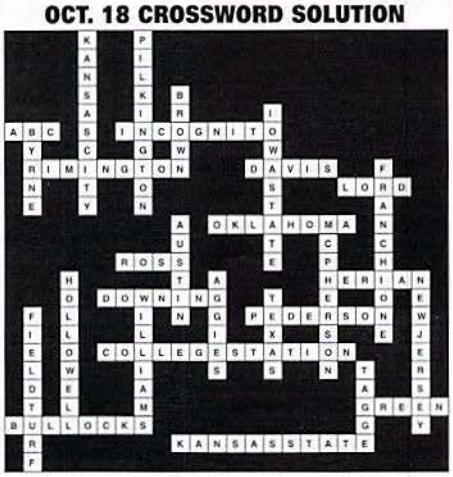

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Signed: Brian Hill, General Manager/Editor

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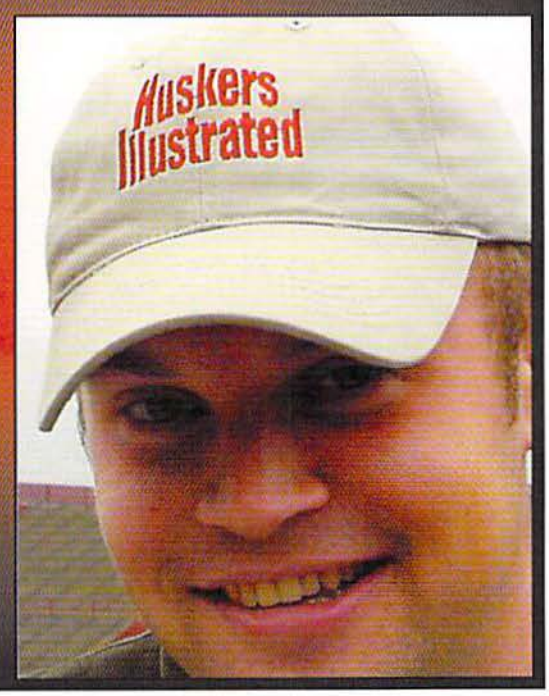

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'Not Just Jammal'

Solich says Lord 'responded very well, as the rest of the team did'

Mike BABCOCK

WITH JUST OVER 12 MINUTES remaining in Nebraska's 48-12 victory against Texas A&M, Joe Dailey ran onto the field at Memorial Stadium to replace Jammal Lord.

The Cornhuskers had run a play, after taking possession at the A&M 40-yard line following a Fabian Washington pass interception. By waiting that one play to send in Dailey, Coach Frank Solich and quarterbacks coach Turner Gill, allowed fans to acknowledge Lord.

He headed for the sideline to a standing ovation.

"I thought it was for Joe, to tell you the truth," Lord said afterward.

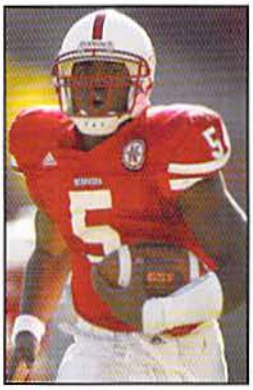
He was joking, presumably, but the way some fans have treated him at times during his career, you had to wonder if there might have been some uncertainty as he ran off the field.

But for one summer-like afternoon, at least, the cheers were sincere. The crowd seemed solidly behind him, even cheering his decision to throw away a pass along the sideline.

One week after a disastrous fourth-quarter at Missouri, Lord did what he does best. He ran like an I-back, rushing for 109 yards and two touchdowns, and played virtually mistake-free.

"Jammal responded well," said Gill. "Our whole team responded well, not just Jammal."

The "not just Jammal" part was Gill's way of reminding people that quarterbacks get too much of the blame when things go wrong and too much of the credit when things go right.



Jammal Lord was successful against A&M for the second time.

Things went right against Texas A&M, and not by chance, according to Lord. "Our team practiced great," he said of the week's preparations. "We knew it was a bounce back (game)."

In what has become typical fashion, he deflected praise directed at him to the offensive line. "It starts with them and it ends with them," he said. "Today they adjusted to the movements, and we were able to make some plays. They got their blocks, and I was able to make a couple of cuts."

And after he made those cuts, "it was daylight," he said.

A lesser individual might not have recovered so quickly to what happened at Missouri. During a fourth-quarter in which the Tigers turned a 10-point deficit into a 17-point victory, Lord fumbled twice, one of which was lost, and threw an interception. Both of his turnovers led to touchdowns.

But Lord has "thick skin," free safety Jerrell Pippens said on the Tuesday before the A&M game. "He's been through a lot these last couple of years. That's just the way Jammal does things."

Pippens is among Lord's closest friends. "We go through things together," he said. "Sometimes, he goes through more intense situations because he's the Nebraska quarterback. But he's a tough person. He's very tough-minded. Plus, last year prepared him for stuff like this. He's going to be OK."

Lord, who had played well for three quarters at Missouri, was more than OK against A&M, for the second season in a row. He had 275 total yards in a 38-31 victory at College Station a year ago.

This time around, he wasn't as productive passing, completing only 2-of-7 for 22 yards. But there was little reason to pass against the Aggies. "I'm not going to come out and say I want to throw the ball 18 times, 20 times. If it happens, it happens," he said. "If it doesn't, it doesn't."

Solich echoed Gill in describing Lord's ability to come back from the Missouri loss.

"I thought he responded very well, as the rest of the team did," said Solich. "Jammal's been through a lot in his career, and it was great to see him really get some things done in a manner I think is extremely good . . . getting yards after contact and picking up yards and moving the ball."

Few quarterbacks are as physical in the running game as Lord, according to Solich.

Some might be faster or quicker, Solich said, but "play after play after play, he keeps himself on the field and has taken a lot of shots. I've got a lot of respect for what he's been all about."

Lord has the respect of his teammates, a fact evidenced by his being chosen as a captain. In that capacity, he sets a good example, as he did during the week leading up to the A&M game.

He "doesn't get too high, doesn't get to low. That's just 'Mall,' " Pippens said.

Lord also is "a humble guy and works hard," said Pippens.

That's why he might have been a little uncomfortable about the ovation as he left the field.

Dailey "had a good day, too, by the way," he said.

And so Dailey did. But this particular afternoon belonged to Lord. ■

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